Name Explain

presents

The ORIGIN of NAMES, WORDS and EVERYTHING in BETWEEN

Patrick Foote

Praise for *The Origin of Names*

"What I really like about *The Origin of Names* is that it makes me think about things I never knew I wanted the answer for."

–Tania, Patrick's mother

"Patrick Foote, the voice, brain, and hand behind the YouTube channel *Name Explain*, has transferred his unique humour and wit to his first book. Perfect for fans of all ages both old and new, this book has something in it for everyone. Whether you have an academic interest or just want a few fun facts to drop into conversations. This book is easily accessible for reading bits and pieces or the whole thing in one go!"

–Claire, friend of Patrick's

"Reading this book makes me relive my school days with Patrick. When he would think up a witty idea for a drama piece, I would instantaneously laugh, stand back, and be filled with pride. Then would say something like 'great job Pat'—the same applies with this fantastic read. Great job."

–Liam, friend of Patrick's

"If I could put *Name Explain* YouTube videos on my coffee table as a conversation starter, I would. And now with the soon-to-be published *The Origins of Names, Words, and Everything in Between*, I can. From the casually curious to etymology junkies (or anyone who's ever halted a conversation to search the internet for the origin of a word) this book will have something for everyone."

–William C. Fox of the YouTube channel *The Exploration with William C. Fox*

"As a recent follower of the *Name Explain* YouTube channel, I've had to catch up quick; there is, indeed, a lot of information covered by Mr. Foote. And it's utterly fascinating! This book is a perfect addition—it is witty and entertaining, but it also 'digs deep' into the roots of where we find the etymology of our everyday words. Definitely recommend."

–Julie, Patrick's girlfriend's mother

"*The Origin of Names, Words, and Everything in Between* is a practical etymology for the curious and obsessed. From countries, companies, toys and games, Patrick covers a wide range of fascinating topics that give you a unique perspective on the origin and meaning of names."

–Wasif, Social Influencer Marketer

"Patrick has made me realise that even the most mundane and ubiquitous words can have an endlessly fascinating story. His whimsical and friendly tone also makes any topic entertaining and accessible. Hmm...now all of a sudden I would love for Patrick to explain 'mundane,' 'ubiquitous' and 'whimsical!'"

–Betty of the YouTube channel Articulations

"This book engages in a way that makes learning fun and surprising. It provides thoughtful, personable and enlightening answers to questions I never knew I had!"

–Becci, Patrick's girlfriend

"A tantalising glimpse into the secret world of names."

–Hilbert of the YouTube channel *History with Hilbert*

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For Milly

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Hello!

Why hello there! You have made a very good decision in life which has resulted in you owning this book. Perhaps you were gifted this book by some estranged family member, or maybe you purchased it for yourself after wandering aimlessly through a dark, musty bookstore. Nevertheless you are here now! Welcome to this fun little book that I have had the honour of writing and that you shall have the honour of reading. There are so many fun and incredible facts throughout this book that, not only do I hope you enjoy reading, but sharing with your friends and family. That's what I love about these kinds of facts and etymologies—you know, when you hear something so fascinating that you can't help but tell everyone you know? That is perhaps what I get the biggest kick out of in life.

Yet, maybe I am going a bit too fast for you. I am sure you have a lot of questions, unless you watch the YouTube channel then you might even be thinking to yourself "who even is this guy?" and "why is he so obsessed with names?" Well, let me do what I do best and explain all of that for you.

NAME EXPLAIN...EXPLAINED!

My name is Patrick Foote. The name Patrick has its roots all the way back to ancient Rome with the Patrician class of people, the Patricians being the noble founding families of Rome (though I fancy myself a bit more of a pleb.) And the surname Foote seems to come from the Norse who came to Britain, deriving from *fotr*, thought

to be the name given to messengers and fast runners, though if you've seen my physical health you'd gather I am far from the fastest of runners.

If you read that and thought "that's pretty boring and I definitely do not care to know where the names of countless other things came from" then not only do you have a very specific thought process, but this book is probably not for you, as the rest of the names being explained within this book are much more exciting than my silly name. If you did read that and it sparked the slightest bit of interest, even just a flicker of curiosity about the world of etymology (etymology being the study of the origins of words, you'll read it quite a bit here) then congratulations! You are just as weirdly fascinated in the history of words and names as I am, you big nerd!

So that's my name explained, but of course I am more than just a name. I'm guessing a lot of you will know me from my popular YouTube channel *Name Explain* where I do exactly what the channel says it does—explain the names of various things! Countries, cities, animals, historic figures, food, video game characters, anything goes on the channel! Perhaps what's most interesting is how I can pinpoint the exact moment I discovered just how interesting names and their origins can be.

My interest in names came way before I had any idea that it was going to work as a YouTuber. I remember being stuck in the back seat of the car with my brother and parents upfront, we were horrendously lost in the Netherlands with seemingly no hope of finding our

campsite which would be home for the next couple weeks. On our adventures being copiously lost we ended up in a part of the Netherlands I never knew existed, it was a selection of islands surrounded by water, connected by bridges and underground tunnels. What an odd place to find yourself in. It was only after the camping trip was over (we eventually found our way) when I was back in Blighty I took to Wikipedia to find out what this place was. The land is called *Zeeland* (its names in English unsurprisingly Sealand) and it is, if you will, the Old Zeeland to the southern country of New Zealand.

Since learning this, this fun little fact stayed with me, why was no one else talking about Old Zealand? And it stuck with me all through my many failed attempts at being a YouTuber. Until one day while working on another now defunct channel I decided to write a video script called *Where's Old Zealand? (and Other Old & New Places!)* which eventually became just *Where's Old Zealand?* I felt it was so different to the rest of my videos on that old channel that I made a whole new channel for it, as well as ideas for more videos about names, and simply dubbed the new channel *Name Explain*, and here we are now.

WHAT'S IN THIS BOOK?

In this book you will find a multitude of names being explained, from the names of humble things like childhood toys and creepy-crawlies, to huge nations and even the planets in our solar system! My aim is

to cover as much as I can in this simple book in a way that everyone can understand. For people new to me explaining names, I hope as much as possible that this book is new to you!

And what if you're a longtime supporter of the channel and have seen all the videos on there? Well first off, thank you! My soul and bank account are much healthier because of you. Second, there are topics covered in this book that have never been covered on the channel. Think of this book as a best hits album! But with subjects already covered on the channel there will be new facts sprinkled in. Perhaps most importantly you won't have to deal with hearing me mispronouncing every word possible.

Let's get into it!

Countries

If you are not reading this on a boat, plane, submarine, hot air balloon, moon, extraterrestrial planet, or *literally* the Sun (are you a bit warm by any chance?) then you are most likely reading this in a country! Each country on this planet has a deep history, culture of their own individual to them, and of course a name! Much like the history of the country, the names also have deep and interesting histories. A far more sensible book would put these countries in alphabetical, or maybe geographical order. This however isn't that sensible book. Imagine this as something of a world tour. One moment you may be reading about a cold Nordic country, the next you are in the Caribbean. Let's take a look!

RUSSIA

Let's kick things off with that huge country of Russia. It can be hard to imagine just how big Russia is seeing it on a map, but did you know that the country covers 11 time zones? When it is midnight in Moscow, the people of Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky are already getting on with their day. Russia is so huge that the entirety of the United Kingdom, Germany, France, and Spain can fit into it with plenty of room to spare!

Like a lot of countries that we will come across, Russia was named after the people who lived and settled the land. In this case being the Rus people. The Rus' were a tribe of Vikings who are thought to have come from Sweden in the ninth century. Even though the lands of Russia were populated at the time, some scholars

believe that the local people of the town of Novgorod in Russia asked them to come to settle their disputes with each other.

Imagine that: if you were arguing with your brother or sister so much that you both came to the decision to ask your parents for help. Nevertheless, the Rus' stayed in the land, founding cities and opening up trades routes around the country, so much so that by the sixteenth century we have evidence the land was called in Medieval Latin *Russi* meaning the people of Russia.

If Russia is named after the Rus' people, then how did the Rus' people get their name? It's thought that their name comes from the Old Norse term *rods*- meaning the men who row. As rowing was the main way the Ros' (and all other Vikings) traversed the waters around them.

PAKISTAN

When you hear a name like Pakistan you would think its roots lie in the ancient world, as it's an equally ancient-sounding name. Yet what if I told you the name of Pakistan can not only be pinpointed to an exact date, but also pinpointed to the exact location it was coined? The time and place? Well, it wasn't somewhere in India thousands of years ago, but it was first recorded on the 28th of January 1933 at number three Humberstone Road, Cambridge, England.

It was in this house that Indian expat student Choudhary Rahmat Ali wrote his "Now or Never: Are We to Live or

Perish Forever?" pamphlet. Rahmat expressed his belief that his fellow Muslims living in the provinces of India should gain independence and have their own nation. He dubbed this nation Pakistan, with the I being added later. The name is an acronym of the names of the Indian provinces he wished were independent from India.

The P comes from Punjab, the A from the Afghan Province, the K from Kashmir, the S from Sindh, and the "tan" coming from Baluchistan, but the stan suffix is seen with other nations such as Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and comes from the Persian and Urdu language meaning "the place of."

Speaking of the Persian language, the name takes on another meaning in this language, in Persian the name means "the Place of the Pure" as *pak* is the Persian word for pure. So yes, Pakistan's name is an acronym AND a pun rolled into one!

AUSTRALIA

Australia is the country of the aboriginals, a people with their own amazing mythology, yet the name we all know the country as today has its roots in Greek mythology. The Greeks had a god for everything. *Dionysus* was the Greek god of wine, *Priapos* was the god of vegetable gardens, but the Greek god we are interested in today is *Notus/Notos* the Greek god of the southern wind.

The Romans adopted the Greek mythology for themselves, but one thing they did was change the names of the gods: Zeus became Jupiter, Ares became Mars, and Notus' name was changed to Auster by the Romans. With the name of the god of the southern wind being Auster, *auster* became a term for south/southern in general through Latin, and Latin is a language with a huge influence in the English language.

This was most noticeable with the concept of Terra Australis during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Before our planet had been fully explored, a lot of mapmakers had to guess and predict what land there was in undiscovered parts of the world. At that time we knew there were copious amounts of land in the northern hemisphere, so *there must have been* huge amounts of land in the southern hemisphere too.

When the land was first discovered by Dutch explorer Abel Tasman he dubbed the land he found as New Holland (pretty obvious explanation there, Abel was Dutch after all) but that name didn't stick. James Cook first set foot on the island in 1770 and dubbed it new South Wales, but it was Captain Matthew Flinders in the 1800s who was the first to navigate the entire coast of the land, proving it was in fact an island, that popularized the name Australia, referencing the legendary Terra Australis in its name. The name became official in 1824.

FRANCE

France, much like the nation of Russia, is named after the people who lived there, in this case being the Franks. The country's Latin name is *Francia* which means "country of the Franks." The name originally belonged to the entire Frankish Kingdom, which at its peak not only included the majority of modern France, but parts of modern Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, and Spain!

The Franks were originally a Germanic people who lived in the north of Europe around the Rhine River. They descended upon the land of France (which back then was called Gaul under the control of Julius Caesar and the Roman Empire) and made it their own.

But how exactly did the Franks get their name? Traditionally one of the popular theories of how they got their name is after their weapon of choice—a type of throwing axe that was called a *Francisca*. How cool is it that France is a country named after a people, named after a weapon! I mean it would be cool, if it were true. More recent evidence points to the axe being named after the people rather than the other way around. Nowadays it's more believed that the name Franks means "freeman" coming from the Old English *franc/franca* meaning free possibly due to the fact that the Franks were tax-free after they conquered Gaul.

It is also from this idea of being free where the term "to be frank" is thought to come from. Meaning to be free to do/say as you wish.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Now of course this country isn't simply called America, but the country is commonly referred to as just that. What is just called America (*sort of*) is the continent that the USA is situated on. Some consider the landmass with Canada in the north and Chile in the south as a single continent of the Americas, while others break them into two separate continents of North America and South America. Panama is generally considered to be the most southern part of North America with Colombia being the most northern part of South America on the mainland.

The story everyone seems to know is that of Christopher Columbus being the first European to discover and set foot on America. Yet the person we are much more interested in today is Italian explorer Amerigo Vespucci. While Columbus still thought that the land he discovered was the western side of Asia, it was Amerigo who put forward the idea that the land was in fact completely separate from Asia, and with foresight on our side, we know who was correct there.

Amerigo didn't name the land after himself (what a humble guy) and instead simply called this land "the New World" as it was land completely new to the Europeans who went on to traverse it all. So, who was it that named the land after the Italian explorer? That honour goes to German mapmaker Martin Waldseemüller. When he was creating a map to reflect all the discoveries made (imagine being alive at the time when the maps weren't finished yet!) he took it upon

himself to label the area where—at my estimation—modern Argentina, Chile, and Paraguay are, as simply America. Coming from the Latinization of Amerigo's name *Americus Vespucius*. Amerigo Vespucci is thought to be named after Saint Emeric of Hungary meaning that the name America was coined by a German, who named it after an Italian, who was named after a Hungarian!

As for the "United States of" part of the country's name well...that's not as exciting. When the country gained its independence it was just that—a collection of states that were united. It started with the thirteen founding colonies and now is the fifty states we all know today. The term's earliest recording is from an anonymous article written in a Virginian newspaper in 1776, with "United States of America" going on to appear in the draft of the Declaration of Independence and in the preamble of the constitution itself.

KENYA

Kenya, of all things, has ostriches to thank for how it got its name. Okay so that might be a bit of a stretch, but regardless. The name Kenya strikes up the impression of the classic, almost prehistoric idea of Africa many have in mind, yet that name is pretty modern. We don't really have any idea of what the people of the land would have called Kenya. The name was officially given to the land when it was declared a crown colony of Britain in 1920.

The country is named after Mount Kenya, the second tallest mountain in Kenya and one of its most iconic landmarks. So how did Mount Kenya get its name? There's multiple suggestions to how this name came to be. One of the more popular stories is when Johann Ludwig Krapf and Johannes Rebmann (two missionaries exploring the land in 1846) asked their native guide what they called the huge mountain they saw in the distance. The guide told them the mountain was called "*kiima kya kenia*" in his language of Kamba. "*Kenia*" translates to glitter or shine in relation to the shining ice that capped the mountain.

Nonetheless, Kamba wasn't the only language in the region. The Ameru people called the mountain *kirimira* which means "mountain of white feather," once again referencing the ice on the mountains. The Kikuyu people called the mountain *Kirinyaga* or *Kiri Nyaga* which can be either translated to "God's Resting Place" or "the Place with the ostriches." Some even feel the mountain looks similar to the male ostrich with the black of the mountain and the white of the snow sharing the same colours as the huge flightless birds, but like I said it's *a tad of a stretch*. It was one of these dialect names for the mountain that led to the mispronunciation in English as Kenya.

GREAT BRITAIN

Okay so hear me out, I know technically there is no country simply called Great Britain. Great Britain is the geographic name for the island that is home to England,

Wales, and Scotland. Which joins up with Northern Ireland to become the country of the United Kingdom. But come on, the name the UK is kind of boring.

Great Britain on the other hand has a much more interesting etymology. The name of just Britain has its roots in a tribe of people that Greek explorer Pytheas came across in the land of Britain in the fourth century BCE. These people were called the Prettani, leading to Pytheas giving two names to the land he found them in—*Brettania* and *Prettanike*. These two names led to the creation of just one name *Pretannia*, which sounds an awful lot like a name we still hear today, Britannia.

So with the Prettani and the name Prettanike for the country, where did the B at the start of its name come from? Well it seems that when writing Pytheas had a habit of using Ps and Bs interchangeably. It was the spelling with the B that stuck around when the Romans took over the land and dubbed it the Province of Britannia.

Yet this Roman province only covered modern day England and Wales, so what was going on with Scotland? Alas, the Romans could never truly conquer the Scottish so they stayed as they were separated from Britain, with the Roman part of Britain eventually became known as the Kingdom of England.

The "great" in Great Britain kind of has two different meanings. The first being that it's the greater in size Britain compared to France's Brittany. But it officially got the title of Great Britain when the Kingdom of

England and the Kingdom of Scotland joined their monarchy together when King James VI became king of both nations, coming together to be called the United Kingdom of Great Britain.

Yet Britain is also sometimes referred to by a different name, Blighty. While this might just sound like a cute pet name for the land, there is actually more history to it than that. The nickname was born out of a sense of homesickness that Brits away from the country came to use with affection like during the peak of the Victorian rule of India, and in the trenches of World War I. It comes from the Urdu word *vilayati*, which means things like foreign, English, or European, becoming a common name Europeans visiting India would be called. At one point the v was misheard as a b, and bilayati became Blighty, blimey!

THE NETHERLANDS

If you think of this land of windmills, stroopwafel, clogs, and tulips, then you may have heard it referred to as a different name, Holland. The country, however, is actually called the Netherlands, so why does this one nation seemingly have two interchangeable names and more importantly, where do these two names even come from?

So what's the difference between these two names? Well simply put, Holland is a region of the Netherlands. Calling all of the Netherlands Holland would be like calling all of the United States of America just Texas. The region

of Holland in the Netherlands is on the country's west coast, and is actually split into the two provinces of North and South Holland. The whole country gets mistakenly called Holland because so much of the nation's identity is within the Holland regions. Holland is home to all the classically Dutch things, like the aforementioned windmills and tulips. Holland is also home to the some of the Netherlands' most famous cities such as the Hague, Delft, Rotterdam, and of course Amsterdam.

The name of the Netherlands does not have the most exciting of origins. It is simply the land of nether, but what exactly does this mean then? The word nether means a few very similar things: low, under, and beneath. As in how a certain part of your body is called "the nether regions" or even the hellscape in Minecraft that is also called the Nether, but the Netherlands has little to do with your private area or a blocky hell. The nether in Netherlands refers to just how low and flat the country is. In fact, it's not just low to the sea level, about one-third of the country's land is beneath sea level! This makes the Netherlands really quite a *nether land*!

The name of Holland however is thought to come from the Old Dutch words for wood, *holt,* and the Old Dutch word for land, *lant.* Meaning the name in Old Dutch translates to Woodland, though weirdly there's not actually that much woodland in Holland. A folklore etymology of the name Holland is that it comes from the term Hollow Land once again referencing Holland's below sea level geography.

THE ISLE OF MAN

Now, I know what you're thinking; *Is the Isle of Man even a country?* Well *sort of.* It's something that is called a crown dependency, meaning that it is part of the British crown but not a part of the UK. So even though they use the British pound, they have their own variation of it, as well as their own flag, language, passport, and government.

At first glance the name of the country might seem incredibly sexist—an island just for men?! But I can assure you that there are both men and women living on the Isle of Man. The "Man" in the Isle of Man does not refer to the entire male sex of the island, but rather one man, whose name also happens to be Man, as his full name is Manannan Mac y Lir in the Manx language. Manannan is a god of Celtic and Manx mythology. Thought to be son of Lir, the Irish god of the sea, making his son lord of the sea. Manannan is believed to be the first ruler of the Island, and also lent his name to the island. The Isle of Man inhabitants hold deeply onto their mythology, claiming that the severe winds, fog, and mists that cover the island at times are his cloak, protecting the island from outsiders.

What's also interesting about the Isle of Man is the variety of languages that have been introduced to the island over its history. The island has roots in Celtic languages, that can be seen with the name of the island's capital Douglas, thought to come from the early Celtic *duboglassio* meaning "black river," while the town

of Ramsey on the island was given its name from the Viking settlers of the island, coming from the Old Norse go*hrams-á* meaning "Wild Garlic River."

JAPAN

Japan's famous nickname is "the land of the rising sun" but this nickname also shines some light (see what I did there?) on the country's actual name too. The name has its roots all the way to the Chinese *jih pun* which translates into "sun rise."

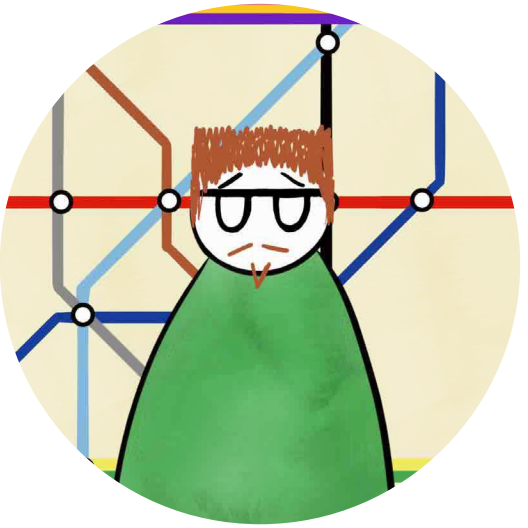
Chinese referred to Japan by this name due to where Japan is in relation to China. Japan is east to China and, of course, it's from the east that the sun rises. The names of Japan are often associated with China, as ancient China had a huge influence on the early civilisations of Japan. Yet this wasn't their first name for the country. Originally China referred to Japan under the simple name "Wa" which is thought to mean things ranging from submissive and obedient, to even meaning dwarf or pygmy!

Unsurprisingly the people of Japan didn't like this name for their land. It was Japanese Prince Shotoku who first coined the term "land of the rising sun" when writing to the Chinese emperor of the time. He referred to Japan as "the land of the rising sun" and to China as "the land of the setting sun" which clearly is a nickname that hasn't become as popular in China.

All of this led to Japan's name is Kanji being this 日本. Kanji is one of the writing systems of Japan and has its origins in China. Yet said aloud these characters do not read as Japan, they read as Japan's name in Japanese, *Nippon*.

As time went on this name got misheard to the aforementioned. The name of *Nippon* in Japanese became the aforementioned *jih pun* in Chinese. It was this name that Marco Polo heard of, as a land of riches and gold. In his travels he wrote the name down as *Zipangu* which eventually turned into the name we all know it as today.

Cities & Towns



Countries are important and everything, but what would they really be without cities, towns and all other kinds of settlements for the human race to excel in? The places we live can take all sorts of forms, from humble sleepy villages to huge metropolitan sprawls. Like with the countries, let's ditch any sort of logical order and tour the planet, it's cities, and their names!

LONDON

While a lot of people would just consider London the center of the city, where Big Ben, Buckingham Palace, and the London Eye reside, the whole Greater London actually covers over 1,500 kilometers square!

There's a few ideas as to where the name London comes from, and even some ideas as to what the city was called before it was the city we know today. Some believe that before the Romans got their hands on Britain the land was called *Plowonida* from the pre-Celtic words *plew* and *nejd* which means a wide flowing river, of course that river being the Thames.

Some historians also believe that the city was once called *Troia Nova* meaning New Troy as it's believed a Trojan exile named Brutus once claimed the land! Yet as awesome a name as that is, New Troy didn't stick around. The first recorded name we have that sounds anything like London is what the Romans called it. They named their settlement by the Thames *Londinium* in 43 AD.

This name is thought to come from a variety of places, one argument is that the city was named after a mythological pre-Roman King of Britain, King Lud. Yet others feel the name London has roots in the aforementioned *Plowonida*. With this name evolving into *Lowonidonjon,* eventually evolving in to the Roman name *Londinium* and of course the name we have today, London.

NEW YORK CITY

Someone once called it the "concrete jungle where dreams are made of," but for now we will stick with the name New York City. The land that houses NYC has been owed by a variety of people over its history. Giving the settlement a variety of names. The land was originally New Angoulême, named by Italian explorer Giovanni de Verrazzano, named after the French King Francis who had been court of the commune of Angoulême.

Yet when the Dutch settled after purchasing it from the native tribe, they sent families to live and work on the land they named in honour of their capital city, New Amsterdam. Yet New Amsterdam fell in 1664 when the British Empire seized and took control of the city, renaming the city New York after the Duke of York at the time, who would go on to become King James II of England! When the United States finally claimed independence from the British however, they kept the name New York. I guess they had nowhere old to make New York the "new" version of.

NYC of course has a couple nicknames too: “the city that never sleeps,” “the melting pot,” and the most notable today, “the Big Apple.” Now I am no expert, but I have never seen any huge apples growing in the city of New York, so where does this nickname comes from? The name was brought into popularity by New York City-based newspaper sports journalist Jon Fitz Gerald. He had heard of stable boys in New Orleans calling New York the Big Apple, he liked the name so much started to use it himself in his articles, and the name caught on.

There doesn’t seem to be any explanation as to why the stable hands called NYC the Big Apple, but from my guess it’s because New York’s race tracks we’re considered the “big time” tracks in the States. Horses love apples, so these big races would be the big apple to them, though this is only my hypothesis.

ROME

The city of Rome is perhaps one of the most important cities still standing on the face of the planet, because it was the home of the Roman Empire! The name of this city actually has roots in ancient legend with the story of Romulus and Remus.

The story of these twin brothers goes that, as babies, they were abandoned by their parents and placed in a basket to float upon the River Tiber, eventually running aground. The children were found by the mythical she-wolf that looked after the twins. The image of the she-wolf feeding

the twins can still be seen across the city of Rome to this day in artwork and sculptures.

When they grew older, the brothers decided to found a city for the she-wolf that looked after them. The brothers argued over where the city should be founded, leading to Romulus killing his brother! Yup, that escalated quickly. With Romulus without Remus, he was able to be sole founder and first king of the city he founded, which he gave his name to: Roma, or as we call it in English, Rome.

While this is just a legend, Rome was really founded due to the growth of settlements on the city's seven hills; the fact that it was close to the Tiber to help civilisation thrive. Yet while we now know the more realistic reason as to how the city was founded, Rome's etymology still lives in the world of myths!

TOKYO AND KYOTO

Yep here we have two-in-one because the names and history of these two cities are so historically linked. Tokyo is the capital city of Japan, but this was not always the case. Japan is a country of two overall qualities: one is this technologically advanced, fast moving, anime-and-video-game-loving power house, which is best represented in the city of Tokyo. The other being an image of tranquility, rising suns, samurais, and ancient wooden buildings with sliding paper doors, which can be best seen in the city of Kyoto. It was this latter city of Kyoto that was once the country's capital.

The name Kyoto in Japanese is this 京都 which simply means capital city. With the first character of Kanji being in English *kyo* meaning capital and the second character meaning city. Historically, Kyoto was the capital of Japan as it's where the Royal Family of Japan lived. At this same time, however, we have the city of Tokyo. Tokyo back then was called *Edo* meaning estuary, a wide part of a river which joins the sea, referencing Tokyo's position. *Edo* was flourishing in trade, being the key point of trade between Japan and the west, leaving Kyoto somewhat behind the times. This came to a head around 1868 when the young Emperor Meiji and his oligarchs wished to move the royal family from Kyoto to *Edo* as that is where the power of trade and access to the west was situated now.

With this change of city for the royal family came a change of name for *Edo*. The city was renamed Tokyo, in Kanji being this 東京. The name Tokyo means "east capital" as it is to the east of the countries old capital of Kyoto. This is why the "kyo" part of the names meaning "capital" is at the start of Kyoto's name (Capital City) while it is at the end of Tokyo's names (East Capital).

CHICAGO

Chicago, often called "the Windy City." It might need some of that wind to blow away it's rather smelly etymology, as Chicago is thought to be named after onions.

Well, the most popular theory pinpoints it to onions anyway, as there are a couple ideas of how the city got its name. All these ideas suggest various Native American words. One idea is that the city was named after a Native Chief called Chicagou, who drowned in the river, now also called the Chicago River, while others believe that the name comes from the Native word "*shecaugo*" meaning "playful waters" or even "*chocago*" meaning "destitute."

Yet as I mentioned earlier, the most popular theory (and the one I like best) comes from those vegetables that make you cry—onions. The Natives had this wonderful way of naming places after what grew there, this was for practicality too, so they could remember where things they needed grew. There was a stream in Chicago and along its banks grew leeks, or as they were thought to be at the time "smelly onions."

This led to the city being called by the Natives "shikaakwa" meaning "smelly onions" and when the French explored the land and heard this name, they changed it in their own tongue to Chicago. With French explorer Robert de la Salle being credited as the first person to write this name, however, he wrote it as "*Checagou,"* but the name we all know it as today evolved from that.

LIVERPOOL

Liverpool is home to four of the most famous names in history: John, Paul, George, and Ringo. Some would

argue that it was the fab four that put Liverpool's name on the map, but where did that name come from to begin with?

Though not directly named after it, Liverpool's name comes from the River Mersey that runs through it. With the pool part meaning simply that, a pool of water. So what does the liver part mean? Well luckily the name doesn't mean a pool of livers, that would honestly be a horrid thing to not only see, but name a city after.

The liver in Liverpool comes from one of two Old English words. The name was originally recorded as *Liuerpul* meaning "Pool with Muddy Water" as the Mersey can get *less than pleasant* at times. The former part of this name comes from the Old English *lifer* meaning "thick, clotted water" which actually isn't much more pleasant than the idea of a pool of kidneys.

The second idea for the origin of the city's name comes from the name *elverpool* meaning "Pool of Eels" referencing the large amount eels that are found in the Mersey. The name of the city inspired the name of the city's avian symbol, the Liver Bird (pronounced lie-ver in this case however) which can be seen throughout the city, on its football teams emblem, and a top of one of the city's famous landmarks, the Liver Building.

The legend goes that if the Liver Birds atop the Liver Building were to fly away then the city would cease to exist. Luckily however they're made of copper and are secured to the building, so I don't think they'll be flying away anytime soon.

SYDNEY

When I look at Sydney's name I immediately think to myself "did someone forget how to spell Sidney?" but of course there is far more to it than that. The city *is* named after someone, even though they weren't even called Sydney!

Thomas Townshend was the British Secretary of State in 1783, and he was the one who recommended that the British establish a colony in Australia. The city was founded in 1788 when the first ship from England carrying over 700 people came to the land. It was for Thomas Townshend that Sydney was named after as his full title: Thomas Townshend, 1st Viscount Sydney. Now how Thomas got that title is where the confusion kicks in.

Thomas Townshend was a member of British Parliament for twenty-nine years, and upon retiring was entered into the House of Lords, earning himself the title of baron. He chose to be Thomas Townshend, Baron of Sidney. Now while he may have been Baron of Sydney, this wasn't referring to anywhere called Sydney. Thomas just liked the name and it was also the surname of a distant family member, Algernon Sidney. He was however worried that the original Sidney family may want to use the name in the future so he changed the I to a Y and became Baron of Sydney, later working his way up the British peerage system to become Viscount of Sydney. Bringing us back to him being Viscount of Sydney, when he suggested to settle in Australia. Which went rather well, as we can see today!

The really silly thing about all this however, they named the settlement of Sydney after someone who LITERALLY has the word town in their name! They wanted to name a town after someone called TOWNshend, but instead chose to use his title and a name that wasn't even his, very silly indeed.

BUDAPEST

While the capital of Hungary may seem to be rich in history, having one of the oldest zoos and subway lines in Europe, the actual city of Budapest is fairly new. In fact, the city as we know it today was "created" in 1873, that's less than two hundred years ago! Yet like I said, parts of it are much older, like the aforementioned zoo. The zoo opened in 1865, that's eight years before the city was formed. How is Budapest Zoo older than Budapest? And of course, where did the name Budapest come from?

The name Budapest, and in fact the city itself, comes from the fact that originally Budapest was three smaller cities that came together to form one city. These three cities were called Buda, Óbuda (which simply means Old Buda) and Pest. And when these cities came together to become one, instead of creating a whole new name for the city, they simply put Buda and Pest together to form the name. Though at one point, Pestbuda was considered, which...doesn't roll off the tongue as nicely.

"Óbuda" is very much part of Buda, hence why it didn't get a clearer reference in the city's name (Óbudabudapest doesn't sound as nice) so, let's look more

closely at the former cities of Buda and Pest. The Danube river runs through the center of Budapest, to the west of the river lies Buda, and to the east of the river lies Pest. While they are now one city, Buda and Pest still pride themselves on their unique identities. Buda is home to some of the city's more historic landmarks, beautiful hills and nature, and more peace and quiet. Pest on the other hand is much more modern, bustling, and is the hub of the city's nightlife.

So we know about Buda and Pest, and we know that the name Budapest simply comes from putting Buda and Pest together, so (if you haven't guessed by now what I am going to say have you even been reading?) where do the names Buda and Pest come from? The origins of both these names aren't clear to us. Buda is thought to have been someone's actual name (perhaps someone who was of importance in the cities ancient history) while Pest is thought to come from what Greek writer Ptolemy called the city in his writings, *Pession*.

While we may not know where the names of Buda and Pest came from, we know for sure where the name Budapest came from! And really isn't that what we are here for?

LLANFAIRPWLLGWYNGYLLGOGERYCHWYRND-ROBWLLLLANTYSILIOGOGOGOCH

Nope, I didn't fall asleep on my keyboard. Llanfair-pwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwllllantysiliogogo-

goch is the longest name of a settlement on Earth, the only place name longer is a hill in New Zealand called Taumatawhakatangihangakoauauotamatea-turipukakapikimaungahoronukupokaiwhen-uakitanatahu. I choose to talk about Llanfair-pwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwllllantysiliogogogoch here in the book as opposed to the YouTube channel so I didn't have to pronounce it. That's something I'll leave up to you.

The village of Llanfairpwll is in Wales, which explains to use the complexity of the village's name as Wales is also home to the villages of Ysbyty Ystwyth and Plwmp. While these might look alien to an English speaker, you must remember that in Welsh W and Y are vowels. The name of Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwll-llantysiliogogogoch is of course in Welsh, and that name actually translates from Welsh into English rather neatly as "Saint Mary's Church in the hollow of the white hazel near a rapid whirlpool and the Church of Saint Tysilio of the red cave."

What's interesting about this ridiculously long name is that it isn't a relic of an ancient past that has persisted in modern ties. Not only was this not always the village's name, but the village's people went out of their way to deliberately gave it a long, silly name in the nineteenth century! Initially called just "*Llanfairpwll,*" clever marketing gurus of the 1880s decided to add a crazy amount of extra letters to the end of its name to attract more tourists and attention to the city. It evidently has worked as we wouldn't be talking about the village today if it weren't for their outrageous name!

Å

From a ridiculously long name to an adorably short name, we have Å, a village in Norway. There are actually a couple villages in Norway called Å, as the name simply comes from the Old Norse word “small river” however the most popular one is near the south tip of one of the Lofoten islands. As it is this Å that get the most visits during the summer months and the one with the comical “Å” sign as you come into the village. Unsurprisingly, this sign has been stolen a fair few times.

Landmarks

Is there anything us humans love doing more than having a good stare at things? I know that I have spent a good while mindlessly staring at pretty useless things and felt sufficiently satisfied. So you can only imagine how long I have spent staring at amazing things! Sometimes something is so amazing to stare at people from all over the world come to stare at it, touch it, take photos with it, and buy tacky souvenirs. These are also known as the landmarks of the world. Some are formed by nature, and some are formed by the hands of humans, but all (well at least the ones in this book) have interesting names.

THE EIFFEL TOWER

The Eiffel Tower certainly is an eye full (I'm so sorry) but how did it get its name? The Eiffel Tower came into existence to be the centerpiece of the *Exposition Universelle* which means "World's Fair." This World's Fair was to celebrate the 100-year anniversary of the French Revolution and over 100 artists submitted plans for what should go on the *Champ-de-Mars* in central Paris. The winning plan belonged to the construction and consultation firm *Eiffel et Compagnie* which was run by acclaimed architect Alexandre-Gustave Eiffel.

Eiffel (the man not the building) had been building and designing structures and bridges for some time before his tower in Paris. This included the Budapest-Nyugati Railway Terminal in Hungary in 1877, the Garabit Viaduct in France in 1884, and the Statue of Liberty, gifted to the

USA in 1878. Yet it was his tower in the center of Paris that he gave his own name to in 1889. Leading to the name we all know today, the Eiffel Tower.

Gustav only constructed the Statue of Liberty but designed and constructed the Eiffel Tower. Still, having involvement in the two most iconic landmarks on Earth isn't too shabby is it? Millions come to Paris every year to see the Eiffel Tower. It's loved by many, but to others, not so much. Perhaps the most famous example of someone who despised it was the writer Guy de Maupassant. He allegedly hated the sight of the tower so much he often ate lunch underneath it, as it was the only place in Paris where it couldn't be seen. Logical.

BIG BEN

Have you ever just stopped and thought for a minute just what a ridiculous name Big Ben is? It's the kind of name you'd call a prize winning bull or something. Yet the name Big Ben belongs to the most iconic landmark in the United Kingdom!

But what exactly am I talking about when I say Big Ben? Well if you're thinking of the whole tower with the clock face on it, then you are wrong. This is a commonly known thing here in the UK, but I shall explain for the unfamiliar. Big Ben is the name for the biggest bell that rings along with the corresponding time of day. The actual tower that houses Big Ben did not have an official name when it was first built in 1844. From 1844 until 2012, the tower was simply called the Clock Tower.

Yet in 2012 an official title was given to it, Elizabeth Tower, to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II.

So now we've cleared up the whole Big Ben bell-not-building debacle, we can look into the name itself. There's a couple ideas as to how the bell got that silly name. One is that it was named after Sir Benjamin Hall, Welsh civil engineer and politician. He was a large, well beloved man in the Houses of Parliament, playing a big role in the construction and installation of the bell itself. It makes a lot of sense for the bell to be named after him, but there's another idea that it was named after popular English boxing champion of the time, Ben Caunt, who was also nicknamed Big Ben.

Whether it was named after a politician or a boxer, Big Ben is the name that has stood the test of time. It's a rather silly name, from a rather silly country.

MOUNT RUSHMORE

You know, I was going to talk about the Statue of Liberty for The States, but we kind of covered it with the Eiffel Tower and its name isn't that interesting, it's a statue... of liberty. So instead, let's look at Washington, Jefferson, Roosevelt, and Lincoln, the four presidents carved into the granite of Mount Rushmore.

Now Mount Rushmore isn't exactly a mountain, it's something known as a batholith, and without this becoming a geology book, that means it is a kind of

rock formation that most characteristically has a side that is more or less flat. Well, flat compared to a normal mountain. The kind of flat surface that would be perfect for sculpting enormous faces into.

Yet before the presidents got their faces on there, the batholith was still called Mount Rushmore. In fact, this is a kind of Big Ben tower vs bell scenario. The batholith is called Mount Rushmore and the sculpting on its side is called the Mount Rushmore National Memorial. So maybe not as confusing as Big Ben. Mount Rushmore was named not after the person who first discovered the mountain (yes for ease I'm just calling it a mountain now) nor the person who first reached its peak. Mount Rushmore was named after a New York based lawyer, Charles Rushmore.

Charles was in the land in 1884, hired by some men of the Black Hills to settle a dispute over tin mines. Years later in 1925 as plans for the memorial were falling into place, Charles Rushmore sent a letter to Doane Robinson (the man who conceived the idea of the memorial) explaining how his named ended up being used to name the mountain. In his letter he explained how one day during his time working in the Black Hills he gazed upon the "mountain of granite rock that rose above the neighbouring peaks" and when he asked the locals (who he had become friendly with) what it was called they explained that it was nameless, but they named it there and then, Rushmore Peak. From there the name went from Rushmore Peak, to Rushmore Mountain, to Rushmore Rock, with Mount Rushmore finally being settled upon.

Yet in 1925 when this letter was sent, construction hadn't even started! It wouldn't be till 1927 when the mountain side would first start being carved. Initially Doane Robinson wanted it carved on some granite pillars known as the Needles, but sculptor Gutzon Borglum felt that they wouldn't have enough to support the carvings, so Rushmore was chosen instead.

CHECKPOINT CHARLIE

If you were in Berlin and knew very little about the history of the Cold War, then you might get very confused as to why so many people are staring, taking photos of, and crowding around a small white box. Well it's not because the Doctor has rocked up in Berlin and painted his box from blue to white. It would be because they are all staring at Checkpoint Charlie.

Checkpoint Charlie came into existence with the Berlin Wall and the Cold War. Now for those who don't know about the Cold War, I shall try to explain it as easily as possible. The Cold War was *basically* the tension that grew between the US and Russia in the fallout of World War II. With Germany being caught in the middle of it all (what with Hitler in WWII and everything) this led to the nation being split into two countries, East and West Germany, and Berlin too being split into two, East and West Berlin.

East Berlin and West Berlin was split up by the infamous Berlin Wall. While this cut off life between the two for the everyday person, officials and others still had to

cross between the two sides of the city. That's where checkpoints came in to play. These weren't the kind of checkpoints where if you died you'd just wake up at the last one you visited. These checkpoints were merely official crossing points between the two sides. There were multiple of these checkpoints throughout the city, but the most central of them (well it would have been in central Berlin before the city got split up) became the most famous. Western Allies called this one Checkpoint Charlie, coming from the official NATO phonetic alphabet in which C equals Charlie. There was also a checkpoint Bravo.

As time went on, western allies grew more affectionate to Checkpoint Charlie, so much so that after the fall of the Berlin Wall the original hut was torn down, but when they realised it's historical value a replica was thrown up. Hey, a replica landmark is still a landmark right?

MOUNT EVEREST

The Burj Khalifa is pretty big, at 2,722 feet it's the tallest building on Earth. So yes while that is pretty tall, Mount Everest is 29,029 feet tall, making it the highest point on Earth!

Before being donned Mount Everest, the mountain went by a couple of different names, and still does to this day. In Nepali it is called *Sagarmāthā* and in Tibetan it is called *Chomolungma*. In my opinion these names are much prettier than the one we in the English speaking world associate with it. The Nepali name of *Sagarmāthā*

means “Forehead in the Sky” and it’s Tibetan name *Chomolungma* means “Mother of the World” which I think we can all agree are better names than Mount Everest.

So why is this the name we have been parred off with in English then? This name was given to the mountain when it was “discovered” in 1852 by the British sponsored Great Trigonometrical Survey. Upon realising that what they had discovered was not just a big mountain, but the biggest mountain on Earth, they needed to name it. It was the leader of the Survey, Andrew Waugh, who decided to name to mountain after the previous leader of the Survey, Sir George Everest.

When George Everest heard however that this colossus of a mountain had been named after him, he was not honoured at all, rather he was embarrassed. George had spent so much of his life on the Survey team in India that he felt all discoveries should maintain their native names and not have names of English language origins thrown onto them. Though we now know that the mountain had/has a native name (two in fact!) at the time of its discovery by the British, they didn’t know of these names. Not only did they not know of them, but the Nepalese banned the Survey team from entering their country! With no known native name and the fear that the natives wouldn’t be able to say his name, George Everest stopped fighting against it and let the mountain be called Mount Everest. Poor George died around a year after the mountain was named after him and we don’t know if he even got to see it with his own eyes.

K2

From the biggest mountain in the world to the second biggest mountain in the world. While it might get overshadowed by Everest, being the second best is still pretty good though, right? But how did such a feat of nature end up with such a human, unnatural, almost robotic, name?

K2 is located on the China-Pakistan border and once again we have a British Surveyor to thank for its name. This time it's a man by the name of T.G. Montgomerie who was exploring the Karakoram Mountain Range, and as he surveyed mountains he numerically named them, adding a K before their number to reference the fact he was in the Karakoram Mountain Range. With K2 being the second mountain he recorded, it was that name that stuck with it to this very day!

However there are other names for the mountain too, like Mt. Everest has names in its native countries as well. In China, the mountain is called *Qogir* which means "white goddess" and in Pakistan it is called *Chogori* meaning "tall majestic." Another name that the mountain is most known by is "the Savage Mountain" due to the huge amount of fatalities that have occurred while trying to traverse the mountain. There have only been around 300 successful summits of K2, but while that might seem like a lot, over 7,000 people have reached the summit of Everest! K2 has taken over seventy lives, the second most of any mountain. So it's the second tallest, second

most fatal, and second to be surveyed. Poor K2 always getting silver.

And yes there is a K1, and a K3, K4, and K5 for that matter! Yet K2 is the one that has gone down in infamy.

TAJ MAHAL

The Taj Mahal was not only constructed by the hands of 20,000 workers, but also with the assistance of 1,000 elephants! All those hands (and trunks) went into building one of the most impressive and beautiful buildings on this planet. In fact it was deemed so beautiful that one legend tells us the architects had their hands cut off once the building was complete, so they couldn't construct anything more beautiful.

Its construction was finished in 1653, making it over 350 years old! Unfortunately, in this time a clear etymology has been lost, but some ideas and myths live on as to how this palace got its name. One of the more common stories is that the building was constructed as a mausoleum for one of the wives of Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan, this wife being called Mumtaz Mahal, who died giving birth to their fourteenth child. She was Shah's third and favourite wife, said to be of extreme beauty and forever devoted to her emperor husband. Her death hit him hard. With a broken heart and an empire at his fingertips, the Taj Mahal was constructed for her, as an ode to his love, with the mausoleum still bearing her name today.

The second story behind the building's name is not as romantic (or polygamous for that matter.) It's also thought that the name comes from the Persian language. In that the word Taj means "crown" and Mahal means "place" so Taj Mahal together would mean "the Crown Place." Like I said, it's nowhere near as exciting.

Quickly going back to the myth that the architects' hands were cut off after the completion of the building. What's interesting about this is there was a similar tale in Russia. Legend has it that Ivan the Terrible blinded the architects of Saint Basil's Cathedral so they wouldn't create anything more beautiful either. While not about names, I just thought I'd mention it if any of you were considering a career in architecture. I'm sure the salary and pension is great, just maybe consider that the loss of body parts could be a real possibility.

ULURU/AYERS ROCK

Now when I was younger this huge sandstone formation went by a different name, Ayers Rock. Yet now it seems that officially you can call this huge rock in the middle of Australia either Ayers Rock or its native name of Uluru, so let's look at both these names!

Uluru is the rock's original name, named by the aboriginal people who lived in the area that Uluru is located on. The name is thought to mean "Island Mountain" due to how the rock raises over the sea of the outback like an island. The name Ayers Rock was

given to it in 1873, when it was "discovered" by surveyor William Gosse. Though I'm sure you can tell he didn't name it after himself. Instead, he named it after Sir Henry Ayers, who was the Chief Secretary of South Australia at the time.

This name stuck with the monolith for over 100 years, but in 1993 the Australian Government decided to give it an official dual name of Ayers Rock/Uluru which was a huge step towards giving the aboriginals of the land the respect they deserve as Uluru is of significant importance to the natives. Then in 2002 the name was changed again! This time it was changed to Uluru/Ayers Rock, which might not seem like a huge deal, simply switching the order in which the names displayed. This was another step in giving the aboriginals a stronger voice in Australia. Perhaps one day the monolith will officially be called simply Uluru.

MACHU PICCHU

In the mountain tops of Peru along the Andes we have the lost city of the Incas, Machu Picchu. Founded around 1450 AD, it is thought to have been built as a refuge for the elite and aristocracy of Inca society, the "Sandals Resort" of their time, if you will. The citadel was also incredibly well built on the mountain side of the Andes, allowing it to be incredibly well hidden and out of sight. And even if someone did spot it, it has only one entrance cutting off any possibilities of a surprise attack.

Believed to have homed three generations of Incas for 100 years, the citadel was quickly abandoned around the time of the Spanish Conquest of America, for reasons that aren't entirely clear to us. Left in the abandoned state that it was "discovered" in on the 24th of July, 1911, this "discovery" was made by Hiram Bingham III. Luckily unlike other "discoveries" in this book, he didn't give it an English name that stuck with it. In fact the name Machu Picchu comes from the Quechua language words *machu* meaning "old *pikchu*" meaning "peak" and not electric mouse as I would have thought at first. Coming together to mean "Old Peak."

GREAT PYRAMID OF GIZA

While the pyramids that cover Egypt are the ones we think of most when thinking of pyramids, there are actually many dotted around the world. There are Aztec and Mayan pyramids that live in South America, one in Rome built around 12 BC as a tomb for a man called Gaius Cestius Epulo, and even one in France! Though the one in France was made of glass in 1989, so maybe it doesn't quite count. Yet the pyramid I want to talk about is in Egypt, that of course being the Great Pyramid of Giza, thought to have been constructed between 2580–2560 BC!

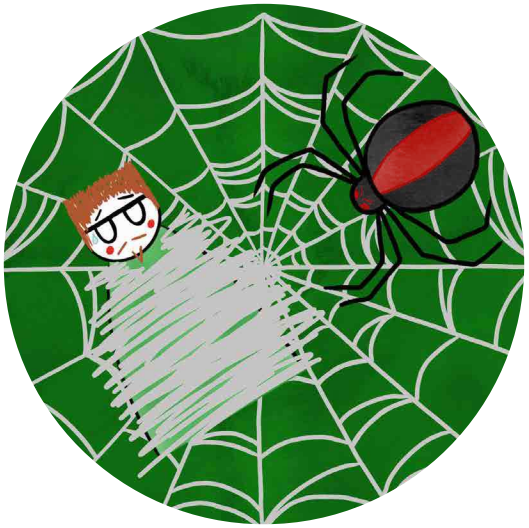
The pyramids of Egypt were built as tombs for great people, with the Pyramid of Giza thought to be for the Pharaoh Khufu. Of course the Egyptians didn't write the way we do today, they used the famous hieroglyphics to write. Hieroglyphs are not perfectly understood

to us today, our knowledge of them are fragments. While some feel that the Egyptians did have glyphs for vowles, others do not, leading us to guess exactly how some of these names are pronounced. It's believed that the hieroglyphs that went into the word pyramid in ancient Egypt were MR, which is thought to have been pronounced as *Mer*. This name of *Mer* is believed to mean "Place of Ascension" as it's where Pharaohs were placed in death to ascend to the next stage in life. Though the actual word pyramid itself is thought to have come from the Greeks. It's thought to either come from the Greek word *pyramidos* meaning "fire in the middle" or the Greek *pyramis,* which meant a kind of wheat cake that peaked at the top; the structures of Egypt reminded the Greeks of these cakes! Of course with a structure as old as the Great Pyramid of Giza, at the time we can only guess at its etymology.

However, we do know that at the time the Egyptians didn't call it the Great Pyramid of Giza. That's a name that was given to it once the ancient Egyptian world was over. We simply call it this as it is the oldest, tallest, and, well, greatest of all the Pyramids in the Giza complex by the city of Giza. The city of Giza was founded in 642 AD, thousands of years after the pyramids had been built. The name of this city comes from the Arabic *er-ges-her* meaning "beside the high" referring to the pyramids that are beside the city.

It's thought the ancient Egyptians would have called it *Akhet Khufu* meaning "Horizon of Khufu" as it was there that Pharaoh Khufu was laid to rest to reach the horizon.

Animals



There are so many amazing animals on our planet. From tiny bugs that crawl in our gardens, birds that fly across the sky, to the fish and assortment of sea life that traverse our oceans. The variety of life that this planet has bestowed upon us is incredible. There are many animal names in this world that I would love to look into, so imagine this as a whistle-stop etymology safari into the creatures on Earth. This section will however be a little bit different, featuring subsections within this section, like Russian dolls! Or I guess like a baby joey in a Kangaroo pouch, that's a more fitting analogy for this moment in time.

MAMMALS

You know there are a lot of things that separate us mammals from the rest of the animal kingdom. Our abundance of hair, our complex brains, our sweat! But it was our breasts we have to thank for our name. Mammals are the only class of animal on the planet that produce milk to feed their young, leading us to be named after the gland that produces milk, the mammary gland. With the word mammary thought to come from the name children call their mothers, mamma.

GORILLA

The gorilla is the biggest of the great apes. They share 98 percent of their DNA with us humans, and they're pretty darn good at throwing barrels and climbing iconic

landmarks. Despite being gentle giants, their name actually has origins all the way back to the sixth century BC with the sighting of, supposedly, a tribe of hairy warrior women! Admiral Hanno of Carthage (Carthage being the previous name for present day Tunisia) sailed a fleet of ships to the western coast of Africa.

It was reported that on his travels through Africa he came across a tribe of hairy aggressive creatures, which his interpreters called "*gorillai*." Unfortunately, we do not know the language his interpreters spoke, so the origins of this word remain a mystery. It's thought that the meaning of this word "*gorillai*" was "a tribe of hairy women" or even just "long haired black women" which could possibly explain the vague phonetic similarities between gorilla and girl, but that's just an idea from my brain.

Whether Hanno came across this all-female tribe, actual gorillas, or something else entirely is not known to us. Yet it was this story that naturalist Thomas S. Savage was inspired by in the 1800s when recording the first scientific name for the species.

PANGOLIN

Pangolins are odd little creatures. Imagine an armadillo, suit of armour, and a basketball all had a baby and you would hopefully have in your head something that is reminiscent of a pangolin. They are found all across Africa and even into Asia; their name is of Asian origin.

Their name comes from the Malay language. These creatures roll up into a ball and use their scales (yes scales, but they're mammals I swear!) to protect themselves. It's thanks to this technique of rolling up into a ball that they got their name. Their name comes from the Malay *peng-goling* which means "roller." The *peng* part of their name is just a Malay prefix, but the *goling* part means "to roll."

While in English we know these critters as Pangolins, a name which in my eyes conjures up a more majestic beast (though they are majestic in their own right) this Malay name is far more fitting and adorable! The *peng-goling* goes rolling!

HIPPOPOTAMUS

Have you ever taken a moment to look at a hippo, swimming gracefully not just through the waters, but even diving underneath too and thought to yourself, *How on earth is that happening?* We're so use to the image of a hippopotamus swimming in water that I guess we have become somewhat numb to the fact we are seeing a bulbous beast acting like a synchronized swimmer!

There are many other mammals that hippopotamuses look somewhat like: cows, pigs, the rhinoceroses even. All of these are stout, robust, four legged mammals. What hippopotamuses definitely don't look like, however, are horses. Horses are slender with much longer legs. It would be ridiculous to name hippopotamuses after horses, except you know, they did.

The name hippopotamus comes to us from the ancient Greeks. They gave us the names of a lot of animals so you may seem them pop up a few more times. Their names comes from a combination of the Greek *hippos* meaning horse, and *potamos* meaning river. So yes, to the Greeks the hippopotamus was the river horse.

LEMUR

These little guys are anything but scary! Ring-tailed lemurs are so friendly to one another that they love to huddle up and form what is known as a "lemur ball" which is perhaps the cutest thing you'll read in this book. Yet their etymology is of a somewhat haunted origin.

These primates were named by Swedish zoologist Carl Linnaeus. Due to these creatures being nocturnal, human-like in shape, moving slowly, and their black and white fur with disproportionately huge eyes, they were named after a spirit of Roman mythology, the *lemures*. These spirits took grotesque human form, came out at night to haunt their living relatives, and cause them harm! Lemures have even appeared in the popular role playing game *Dungeons & Dragons*, but from my limited experience of the game I don't think lemurs do.

While it might not seem fair that lemurs are stuck with this ghoulish name as they aren't scary at all, you may only think they aren't scary because you are thinking of the ring tail lemur, the most popular species of lemur. The Aye-Aye Lemur, however, is rather scary looking. With its piercing eyes, sharp teeth, extraordinarily long middle

finger, you might think you've seen a ghost yourself if you came across one of these at night!

SPERM WHALE

While things like whales and dolphins may resemble fish and live in water like fish, they are indeed mammals. It's truly a wonderful world that we live in that a creature that can survive underwater at depths of over 3,000 feet and hold its breath for ninety minutes has more in common with the family dog than any fish. There are many kinds of whales that bless our oceans, from the gigantic blue whale to the unfairly named killer whale (orca is a much better name anyway) but alas, the immature schoolboy within me insists that we look into the name of the sperm whale.

One of the key things that separate sperm whales from the rest of the whale family is it's huge square head. It's within this huge square head that houses an organ unique to the sperm whale, though other marine mammals have similar organs. It's believed that this organ is used to help with their echolocation or their buoyancy.

During the nineteenth century at the boom of whaling (which unfortunately is still far too common in this world) sailors would catch these giants and, as they harpooned them, would notice a wax like, white fluid coming out of them. This fluid was produced by the aforementioned gland, but well, with sailors being sailors they thought it was the whale's sperm. In turn they called the liquid

spermaceti, meaning literally whale seed, and when they realised the liquid came from this head glad and not from...well you know, they called this organ the spermaceti organ. Yet while we know now this certainly isn't sperm, both male and female sperm whales produce it, the name has stuck around.

The actual name "whale," however, doesn't have as clear an etymology, thought to date all the way back to Old English with the word *hwæl*.

BOBCAT

If someone told me they had a bobcat, I'd presume they had a pet cat called Bob or Robert that they affectionately called bobcat. I would definitely be in for a surprise when I went to stroke their precious "bobcat" and its claws sunk through my skin! It's a very fierce kitty with a rather silly name.

When thinking about how the bobcat got its name your mind most likely comes to the conclusion mine did—it was named after someone called Bob—but that isn't the case. In fact, the "bob" in bobcat is more of an adjective than a noun due to the fact that it is a bobbed cat.

Bobbed is the term for having something shortened or doing something quickly. Like how a rubber duck bobs up and down in the bath, or getting your hair cut into a short bob. As the short story by F. Scott Fitzgerald goes, "Bernice Bobs Her Hair." So what's so bobbed about the bobcat? While it is one of the smaller of the

undomesticated cats, what's particularly short about it is its tail. Bobcats have much shorter tails than other cats and it's from this "bobbed" tail that earned it the title of a bobcat!

GIRAFFE

There are plenty of animals that you could say a giraffe is a combination of. It looks like a creature with the body of a horse, and the neck of a flamingo. It even has a similar body and neck of an alpaca, but with the colours and a fur pattern that looks almost like the scales of a reptile. However when giraffes first became apparent to English people in the fourteenth century through stories of people who had seen them in their native habitat of Africa, they were described as a combination of two different animals.

Up until the late nineteenth century the English were calling giraffes "camelopards" which yes, is a portmanteau of camel and leopard, and also yes before you ask I am *very upset* we don't use this name anymore. They earned this name as when visitors of Africa came back to England and describe this animal. They describe it as having the body and neck of a camel, and the spots of leopard. This of course led to people imagine and drawing all kinds of crazy beasts that they thought giraffes might look like, with varying degrees of accuracy.

The actual name giraffe however isn't a combination of two animals, but it's still believed to be a combination

of sorts. The English name giraffe derives all the way to the Arabic version of the name *zarāfa* which origins aren't too clear to us. One theory I've found is that this name comes from the Persian *zurnāpā*. With this Persian word being a combination of *zurnā,* which is a type of flute played within the Middle East and the Persian *pā* meaning "leg" which of course means the giraffe's name could possibly mean something along the lines of "flute legs" which looking at their long lanky legs, I can see this making sense.

While the name camelopard may have more or less be replaced with giraffe, it still lives on in a constellation in our night sky! A constellation that looks somewhat similar to a giraffe, named Camelopardalis.

BANDICOOT

The bandicoot is a species of animal that became known throughout the world thanks to one fruit loving, crate smashing, gem collection, video game icon. Yet while that certain bandicoot was bright orange and stood on hind legs, a normal bandicoot scurries on four legs, grows only to around thirty inches in length, and are more a sandy brown colour than bright orange.

While bandicoots are native to Australia, they are actually named after a type of rat found in India. This Indian rat is called a *Bandicota,* known also as a bandicoot rat. This name of *Bandicota*/Bandicoot rat is believed to comes from the Telugu language name for them *pandi-kokku* meaning "pig-rat" as the bandicoot

rat looks somewhat more pig like than a usual rat. When explorers discovered the Australian bandicoot, it reminded them a lot of the bandicoot rat they had seen in India, so they named this marsupial after the Indian rat.

One thing that I couldn't not mention is when remains of an extinct species of bandicoot were discovered in Australia, the genus was called Crash, and the species was of course bandicoot. Yep, once upon a time there was a creature on our planet that has now been called *Crash Bandicoot*.

GIANT PANDA

While we also have the much smaller, tree dwelling red panda on our planet, we're here to look into the name of the lovable black and white, bamboo chewing, giant panda. However, the name of "panda" was first used in reference to the red panda. The name appeared in 1825 being recorded by French zoologist Frédéric Cuvier. While we know he gave the red panda the Latin name *Ailurus fulgens* and the common name of panda, we don't seem to know where exactly he pulled out the name panda!

One idea as to where this name does come from however, is from the derivation of a Nepali word *pónya* which refers to the ball of the foot as red pandas (and giant pandas) which have a modified wrist bone on the ball of their front feet that help them with the eating of bamboo. Like I said, the red panda was the first panda to be name panda–I just said panda too many times.

The huge black and white bears were first seen by another Frenchmen by the name of Armand David in 1869. Armand was exploring the forests of China when he came across hunters who he bought dead specimens to take back to Paris. In Paris, they were given the Latin name *Ailuropoda melanoleuca* meaning "cat foot, black and white."

It wasn't known straight away that these bulbous, bamboo-loving bears were related to the red pandas. So before that was discovered they went by names like "mottled bear" and "parti-coloured bear," each name referencing the bear's uniquely coloured fur. "Mottled" means marked with spots or smears of colours and "parti-coloured" means consisting of two or more colours. In China, giant pandas are called "xióng māo" which means "big bear cat" as giant pandas are quite frankly big, cat-like bears. One of the more cat-like features of them are their pupils—they have slit-like pupils like cats, as opposed to rounded pupils like we and other bears have.

When it was discovered that the "mottled bear" was related to the red panda the name had to be changed, and the black and white bear became the giant panda, with it being giant compared the much smaller red panda.

HUMAN

Of course while we think we may rule this planet, we are just another member of the animal kingdom. There are a

lot of things that separate us from the rest of the animal kingdom, such as our much more complex brains, our settlements and civilisation, our inventions! Did you know humans are the only animals that are aware of their inevitable death and become full of dread and anxiety when they realise this and on the same token, when they realise they haven't done enough in their life and valued work and money over family and friends? That fact sounded a lot more fun in my head, I apologise.

Human is one of those words that just evolved over time, much like us humans actually did! It's earlier roots are thought to come from the Proto-Italic ɣomos and the Proto-Indo-European *dégom* which both mean things along the lines of "earth/soil/ground." These two words evolved into the Latin *humus,* which turned into *humanus,* which then turned into *humaine* in Old French. Finally from there becoming human in English like we know it today. It's interesting that the name human has its roots in ancient word from ground. So much mythology involves us humans coming from the ground, the womb of mother earth as it has been put in the mythology of the Arikara Native Americans. This can even be somewhat seen in the creation of humans in Greek mythology, where Prometheus formed humans from clay and mud from the earth.

Our Latin name is of course *Homo Sapien* with "*Homo*" meaning "man" in Latin. While we are now, we aren't the only "homo" to have dwelled on this planet. There was of course *Homo Erectus*, meaning "upright man." as these guys are thought to be the first humans to stand upright like us. *Homo Habilis* meaning "handy man" as these

humans were skilled with tools. Yet we too are handy and stand upright, so what does *sapien* mean?

Homo Sapien is a name that was introduced to us by the same man who named the lemur, Mr. Carl Linnaeus—this makes humans the only animal to name themselves! *Sapien* comes from the word *sapient* which means "be wise" as the key feature that separates us from the humans before us is our much more sophisticated and complex brains!

BIRDS

Birds are truly incredible creatures. They can survive at sea, in forests and jungles, deserts, and unlike a lot of other animals, species of birds have made themselves at home in cities and towns created by us humans! They can be grey, brown, and white to help mask into their surroundings, or they can be vibrant colours with beautiful patterns! As exciting as birds are, the name bird itself isn't as exciting of origin. Believed to date all the way back to Old English with the same word "bird!"

PIGEON

There are very few parts of the world you won't see a pigeon in. So often are they deemed pests or even more strongly called "flying rats." This is just a testament to how adaptable these birds are! Pigeons actually go by a few names. Along with doves, they are part of a group of

birds called “columbidae” with this name coming from the animals Latin name, *columba*.

Another name for pigeons is rock dove. This name is more associated with them when they are in the wild and not hunting for scraps on the city streets. They are called “rock” doves as in the wild they tend to make their homes in the side of cliffs and rock ledges. The name dove (which pigeons are) is of a pretty interesting origin, and painstakingly obvious once you realise. It’s believed to originate from the word “dive” referencing the way the fly, the dove dived into the sky! Yet the name most popular with them is of course pigeon and this name is thought to come from the Latin *pipionem* meaning “young chirping birds.”

BALD EAGLE

The icon of America! These birds of prey can be seen printed on objects of Americana all across the States. But as intimidating as they are, their names aren’t quite as scary. Despite their name, bald eagles aren’t actually bald. Well, not bald in the sense that we humans think of as being bald. The bald in the bald eagle is thought to come from the word “piebald” which means “spotted or blotched with black and white” which, on a bald eagle, would mean the pure white feathers that make up its head and tail.

The word eagle however dates all the way back to Latin with *aquila* meaning “the dark coloured bird” as other birds of the time were lighter in colour! Eagles have, of

course, lent their name to other things. An eagle in golf is a score of two under par, a score of one under par is called a birdie, with an eagle being better than a birdie! To stare at something "eagle-eyed" is to be observant and notice things quickly, much like the great eyesight of an eagle. And to be "spread eagle" is to be stretched out with your arms and legs extended!

PUFFIN

Puffins are cute little seabirds with cute little beaks and an even cuter little name: puffin! While this name might sound like a sound or an action you'd do with your mouth. The name more likely means puffing as in swelling up, like a pufferfish. Though puffins don't inflate like a pufferfish, that would be too cute. The puffiness of puffins comes from one of two sources, or maybe a bit of both.

Puffin was a name originally applied to a bird now called a "manx shearwater" which was once called a "manks puffin" because it was recorded as having very fatty, puffy, meat when eaten. And it seems that this name over time went from being the name of this previous bird to the bird we know as a puffin. The second idea behind this puffy name is that puffins are rather puffy! Especially as babies, when they are called pufflings. When puffins are young they have a dense covering of down feathers that keep them warm while their parents are off hunting for fish! These feathers of course make them look rather puffy.

Puffin's scientific name is *Fratercula arctica* which means "little brother of the north" in Latin. This "little brother" more means "little friar" as their black and white feathers are very much like the robes of a friar. Yes, even its scientific name is adorable.

FLAMINGO

Flamingos are one of the few animals in our kingdom that can pride itself on being bright pink! Yet of course they are not naturally pink, flamingos are born with grey feathers but go pink as they grow older due to the shrimp in their diet. Yet even if they weren't pink, their lanky awkward bodies and hooked beaks would make them stand out from the avian crowd regardless.

If they weren't pink, however, the flamingo may very well have ended up with a different name entirely as the name flamingo is strongly related to its colouring. The bird is native to much of the world, including South America. And of course we know that the Spanish were the first Europeans to really explore South America, so by no surprise the name is of Spanish origins. The name flamingo is thought to come from the Spanish *flamenco*, the fiery Spanish music and dance. Anyone who has seen *flamenco* dancing will know that the traditional dress of the dancers if bright red. The Spanish explorers of South America were reminded of the red dresses of the dancers when they saw these bright pink birds, so they were named after them!

The actual name of the dance *flamenco* is thought to come from the Latin *flamma* meaning "flame," once again linking the garb of the dancers and the feathers of the bird together.

TURKEY

Eaten in their millions across the festive season, turkeys have the privilege of being the only bird to share their name with a country! Before the bird we all know as a turkey today there was actually another kind of bird called a turkey, a bird that is now called a guinea fowl. These guinea fowls are native to Africa and were brought to Europe via traders from the Ottoman Empire, of course the Ottoman Empire is also the Turkish Empire. These birds became so associated in Europe with the Turkish traders who brought them there that the male guinea fowls became known as turkey-cocks and the females turkey-hens. Eventually becoming just turkeys.

Yet these were guinea fowls from Africa, not the turkeys we now know of that sit on our dinner plates at Christmas. The modern turkey comes from parts of the US and parts of Mexico, brought over to Europe by the Spanish. The birds from the New World looked like guinea fowl turkeys and tasted like guinea fowl turkeys, so these birds were too called turkeys.

I didn't cover the country of Turkey in the countries section of this book, so let's cover it here. Though not entirely clear to us, the name Turkey is thought to mean "the Land of the Turks" with the name "Turks" thought to

come from the Byzantine Greek "*Tourkos,*" though were this comes from still remains a mystery.

VULTURE

While vultures are birds of prey, unlike other birds of prey that hunt down their food, vultures are scavengers. Meaning they soar the skies looking for dead animals to pluck rotten flesh from. It's because of this that vultures tend to have a bit of a bad reputation. They are actually incredibly clever and social birds.

Their name comes from this darker image they have. It's thought to come from the Anglo-French *vultur,* as well as the name *vellere* which is believed to mean "to pluck, to tear" in relation to how they pluck and tear at their claimed food.

As well as an interesting name on their own right, vultures also have interesting collective names. A group of vultures flying in the sky is called a "kettle" as when groups of them fly they catch thermal updrafts that looks like water boiling in a pot! They have a second collective name. When they are collectively feeding on the remains on an animals they are known as a "wake" of vultures. Like how a funeral reception is also called a wake.

CANARY

These poor little guys have earned themselves a place in history and language thanks to the term "canary

in a coal mine" which means you aren't in the best of scenario. This phrase comes from the fact that miners would take caged canaries down into the mines with them. These little birds were there to judge the air in the mines, if the canary died this would mean that the mine was full of carbon monoxide giving the miners time to escape. While any death sucks, these guys were sacrificed to save the lives of countless miners.

But anyway, their name, I'm sure you guys have heard of the Canary Islands off the coast of Africa. The ancestors of the birds we keep as pets now come from these islands, so the birds were named after the islands. The name of these islands in Latin is *Canaria Insula* which means "island of dogs" from the Latin word *canis*, dog, which is also where we get the modern word "canine" from. The islands were named this as one of the islands had a huge dog population.

So the bird is named after the islands, and the islands are named after dogs!

DODO

Dodos are perhaps most famous for being dead. In fact they are so known for their dead status that "dead as a dodo" is a common phrase to refer to dead things! The poor dodo never really stood a chance at surviving when they were discovered by humans on the island of Mauritius in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. While when we think of extinction a lot of the time we

think of the dinosaurs dying from cosmic sources, dodos were actually hunted by us humans to death.

There's a lot of words that could be used to describe the dodo: curious, inquisitive, unafraid. It was these qualities that made the birds not scared of humans when they first came across them. Thus, the poor things were hunted, killed, and eaten easily. So easily, in fact, that they became extinct. Because of this, the Portuguese saw a different quality in them—stupidity. They called them dodos from the word *duodo* meaning "simpleton." Poor little dodos.

PENGUIN

While most associated with colder climates, penguins can be found all across the world. From Australia and New Zealand, to the south of Africa, to South America, and even in the Galapagos Islands! The name penguin, in spite of this, comes from somewhere where they can't be found the wild—Wales.

Penguin comes from the Welsh *pen* meaning "head" and *gwyn* meaning white, coming together to be *pengwyn,* white head. As many species of penguin do in fact have white heads. However the little tuxedo wearing birds that help beat up superheroes dressed as bats weren't the first birds to be donned with the name.

The Golden Hind was a ship that circumnavigated the globe between 1577 and 1580. The ship was captained by Englishman Sir Francis Drake and would have had

Welshman on it too. It was these Welshmen who logged the name *pengwyn* during their travels around Newfoundland in Canada, however they weren't referring to penguins that we know but a now extinct bird called the great auk which looked very much like the modern penguin.

The name penguin since then went on to be the name for the little guys we all love today as they look so much like the great auk. Even in the scientific name of the great auk it's penguin roots remain, *pinguinus impennis*.

BIRD-OF-PARADISE

The bird-of-paradise is not one bird, but rather a collection of beautiful, colourful, almost alien birds that for the longest of time lived untouched by human society living in New Guinea and its surrounding islands. Like I said, this name is a collective name, but the birds of this species have names along the line of King bird-of-paradise, Red bird-of-paradise, Emperor bird-of-paradise, and even the King of Saxony bird-of-paradise!

There doesn't seem to be an exact moment in time when these birds were dubbed the birds-of-paradise, but it's pretty understandable to see why they are. To outsiders these exotic colourful birds came from exotic colourful lands. To European eyes it make sense that somewhere like New Guinea would earn the title paradise.

The word paradise itself comes to us from the Old French *paradis* which is thought to come from the Old Iranian

paridayda which means "walled enclosure" which goes all the way to the original "paradise" in Christianity, the Garden of Eden.

REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS

Yes to save the poor printers some time we are putting reptiles and amphibians in one section together. Though don't let that make you think these guys are that similar. While they may look similar at a first glance there are some real key differences. You may think the key difference is that amphibians live in water and land, while reptiles on live on land, but crocodiles and turtles survive on both and are reptiles. Some of the key differences (just to name a few) are that amphibians have smooth skin, while reptiles have scales. Reptiles lay their eggs on land while amphibians lay their spawn on the water. And amphibians go through metamorphosis as they grow older, while reptiles simply grow up.

Much like many reptiles, the word reptile hasn't changed much in history. It comes from the Old French *reptile* meaning "creeping or crawling animal" as many reptiles do just that. Amphibian comes from the Greek words *amphi* meaning "of both kinds" and *bios* meaning "life" as they can live "both kinds of life" in water and on land.

CROCODILE

Crocodiles are one of the most fantastic animals on our planet. Surviving millions of years, they were even on our planet when the dinosaurs roamed, and have remained relatively unchanged since—why change perfection?

Being around so long has led to crocodiles playing roles in human history, most noticeably the crocodile headed god of ancient Egypt, *Sobek*. One of the earliest mention of the name of these monsters comes from ancient Greek historian Herodotus, who called the creatures he knew of in the Nile River *krokodilos* and this name evolved into what we have today, crocodile. It's thought that Herodotus created this name from the Greek *kroke* "pebbles" and Greek *drilos* meaning "worm" making the crocodile the pebble worm, which sound far less intimidating.

Now it might seem odd to describe something like a croc as a worm to us, as when we think of worms we tend to think of those weird pink guys that roll around in dirt. Yet in the past reptiles and worms were one, especially when it came to the mightiest (and definitely real) reptile—dragons! Calling dragons worms was common in the past, Tolkien even named a race of dragon's worms in Middle-Earth, and it stemmed from the Old English *wyrm*. It's thought this comes from the way some reptiles moved, wriggling around like worms. Think of how snakes, and even Chinese dragons are somewhat serpent-like. It can even been seen to this day with the

small snake-like reptile, the slow worm. It's definitely not a stretch to say that crocodiles are like dragons.

FROG & TADPOLE

Frogs come in many shapes and sizes. From ponds in England to trees in the Amazon rainforest. Yet what they all have in common is their love of jumping and hopping around. It's from all this hopping around as to where they get their name. The name frog is thought to come from the Germanic *frosch* that meaning quite literally "hopper."

It would seem that frogs are stuck with being named after things they do as there's a genus of frogs called the *rana* which is a Latin name, this name comes from the second most known thing that frogs do, no not eat flies, but go ribbit ribbit. With the name *rana* being an imitation of this famous froggy sound.

But before a frog even has the audacity to call itself a frog, they are called tadpoles. It truly is a wonder that these little things that seem to be no more than a head and a tail, can sprout legs and jump out of the water over time. This name of tadpole comes from Middle English words, *tadde* meaning "toad" and *pol* meaning "head" as the key part of a tadpole does just look like a toad's head. A far more adorable name for them however is "pollywog" once again using the Middle English word for head *pol* but adding the Middle English *wiglen* which means "to wiggle" which is not only cute but yes, makes

a certain tadpole-based Pokémon's name make far more sense.

HERMANN'S TORTOISE

Tortoises have the special privilege above all animals of perpetually looking like grumpy old men. So it's only fitting that this species of tortoise has a name that a grumpy old man would have. If you're reading this and you are actually called Herman, I apologise, I'm sure you're not a grumpy old man, in fact you are an awesome person for reading.

There is a specific reason why I chose the Hermann's tortoise over just "tortoise" or any other species of tortoise. That's because throughout the majority of writing this book, my own Hermann's tortoise, Bowser, has been right next to me! Scurrying around in his vivarium and munching on dandelions—he wouldn't forgive me if I didn't mention his kind.

Anyway, that's far too much personal information. There's a couple ideas as to where the name tortoise comes from. One idea is that it comes from the Latin "*tortus*" which means twisted, referring to how many species of tortoises (including the Hermann's) have twisted front legs. These "twisted" front legs are used to burrow and even climb. Well climb small hills and grassy knolls, not trees. It would make sense that Latin speaking people would name tortoises after their legs. As a lot of the "twisted leg" tortoises, like the Hermaan's, are found all around the Mediterranean where Latin speakers

dwelled too. We can only imagine what tortoises would've been named if they were named after the more hooved footed legs of the giant tortoises found on the Galapagos Islands.

There is however a second idea as to where the name tortoise comes from, of a much darker origin. Some believe it comes from the Latin "*tartaruchus*" meaning "of the underworld" in reference to *Tartarus* the Greek underworld that the gods looked down upon you in in eternal damnation! What the poor tortoise did to be named this is beyond me. Perhaps it's a reference to the idea of the World Turtle/Tortoise that some mythologies believe are carrying our Earth.

But we are here to look more specifically at the Hermann's tortoise, which, no, wasn't named because it looked like it should be called Herman. It was named after French naturalist, Johann Hermann.

PYTHON

There are many snakes in the world, so what earns a snake the title of python? Pythons aren't venomous, while that may sound like a good thing, that doesn't mean you aren't completely safe from them. Instead to deal with their prey pythons constrict their long, thick, bodies around their food to kill them. Some of the biggest snakes in the world are pythons, with the reticulated python being able to grow up to 30 feet long!

The name python however can be traced back to just one snake, *Pothōn*. The *Pothōn* is of Greek mythology featured most famously in a story with the Greek god Apollo. Apollo and the *Pothōn* were old enemies. Their battles reached a climax when Apollo had heard of a dragon that was attacking people on Earth, he knew this "dragon" was none other than the *Pothōn*. His final encounter with the *Pothōn* saw Apollo firing one of his arrows straight into the snakes head, pinning it to the ground. Before firing a few more arrows to finally quell the monster.

While the *Pothōn* of ancient Greek mythology was bested, its name still lives on through the many pythons that still sliver on our planet. But maybe if you spot one don't pin its head to the ground with an arrow.

AXOLOTL

Now that jumble of letters may look like nonsense, but the axolotl is a type of salamander. These guys come in all shapes and colour, most known however are the pink ones with red thrills that look as close to a real life Pokémon as we'll get. These guys are found in Mexico, so there name is of Nahuatl in origin. Nahuatl is the language spoken by the Aztec people who are native to Mexico.

As cute as axolotl are, there name isn't as cute. Somehow these guys ended up with a name that basically makes them aquatic butlers. In Nahuatl their name literally means "servant of water" coming from a combination of

their words "*atl*" water, and "*xolotl*" meaning "slippery/wrinkled one/servant/slave!" So I guess they could be the servants of water, or the winkled ones of water, either way this image doesn't do the axolotl justice. Also if you are a fan of this etymology and actually wish to enslave an axolotl to be your servant, then you're probably in for a disappointment. These salamanders wouldn't be able to wash your dishes or fold your ironing I'm afraid.

Axolotl are also known as "Mexican Walking Fish" as they are from Mexico, and their appearance is far more fish like than other salamanders or amphibians. Of course aren't actually fish.

TYRANNOSAURUS REX

Before we lived on this planet, this world belonged to a different kind of creature altogether, that being the dinosaurs! And no dinosaur has become more notorious than the tyrannosaurus rex. Now to the average human (myself included) the idea of what exactly dinosaurs were and how they lived has been very much shaped by portrayals in fiction. This has been especially the case for the tyrannosaurus rex.

While dinosaurs are reptiles, more recent findings have led more and more people to believe they were more bird-like than the movies have made them out to be. It's thought that the fierce image of the T-Rex we have in mind looked more like a big angry turkey in reality. What's also so throwing about dinosaurs is just how much time there was between them, while in our heads

(well my head anyway) the dinosaurs lived together, but in fact there is thought to be 85 million years between the stegosaurus and the tyrannosaurus!

The names of these dinosaurs, however aren't quite as old. Dinosaurs wouldn't have named themselves (*The Land Before Time* lied to us all!) and there wouldn't have been anyone around to name them then. Dinosaurs have earned their names by us humans based on what we know about them from fossils. Such as the name triceratops coming from the Greek *tri* (three) *ceras* (horn) and *ops* (face) as the triceratops had three horns on its face. Or the Utahraptor coming from where it was discovered, Utah, and the Latin *raptor* meaning plunderer or thief.

Tyrannosaurus Rex however being the mightiest of dinosaurs receives the mightiest of names. It was named in 1905 by Henry Fairfield Osborn, its name is formed of the Greek *tyrannos, sauros,* and *rex* which is English translates to Tyrant Lizard King! Named the Tyrant Lizard King in honour of its huge size, and it's hunting dominance over other known dinosaurs.

CHAMELEON

Chameleons are known for many things: there long tongues that pop out in an instant to catch flies, their unique eyes that allow each one to look in any direct, and perhaps most famously their ability to change the colour of their scales. With all these unique features going for them, you'd think any one of them would

be something to name them after, however as it is with these things, they weren't named after any of these features.

So what were they named after? A different animal completely. I'm sure you can see the latter half of the name "leon" and this comes from the Greek word for lion, *leon*. The first half of the name comes from the Greek *khamai* which means "on the ground" so this lizards name more or less translates to "ground lion."

Why these guys got dubbed ground lions isn't exactly known to us. Surely a normal lion is a "ground lion" right? I haven't seen many in the sea or sky recently. The best guess is that someone though the crested heads of the chameleons looked like a lion's mane, so it got named in honour of the big cat. A rather odd name for a rather odd animal.

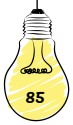
CANE TOAD

I'm sure my Australian readers just had a shiver go down their spine at the mention of the cane toad. Cane toads have an interesting history, originally from Central and South America they were introduced to parts of the Pacific and Australia to be a savior of their crops which kept on getting eaten by other pests. The cane toad however went on to become even more of a pest in Australia, being poisonous and able to kill other animals, Australia is still trying to figure out ways to deal with these invasive pests!

The actual name “toad” is of a terribly boring origin. All we know of it is that it comes from the Old English *tadige* and nothing more. These toads have become called cane toads however due to the fact that they were brought to Australia to eat and exterminate the sugarcane beetle, with this beetle obviously being named after the sugar cane it ate so much of. The sugar cane was being eaten by a beetle that they called the sugar cane beetle, so they introduced a toad to eat the beetles which they called a cane toad. Perhaps next Australia will introduce a “cane wolf” or “cane eagle” to eat all the cane toads.

KOMODO DRAGON

While lizards are reptiles, not all reptiles are lizards. It’s because of this fact that the Komodo dragon can be named the biggest lizard on the planet. Though there are many other snakes, reptiles, and alligators that outsize this beast.



These guys get huge! Being able to grow up to nine feet long, eat birds and even mammals. It’s because of their size and eating prowess they have earned themselves the title of dragon. Dragons have appeared in various mythologies, from the slaying of the dragon by Saint George to the dragons of ancient China. The word dragon however is of Greek origin from their word *drakon* which meant “serpent.” This idea of dragon coming from worm like serpents ties in with what we mentioned earlier about dragons when we talked about crocodiles.

The Komodo part of their name comes from where they are found, the island of Komodo which makes up a part of Indonesia. Where the name Komodo however comes from doesn't seem to be known to us.

GODZILLA

One of the rarest and most dangerous reptiles on our planet. It's not too sure to us exactly where Godzilla comes from, some say Godzilla are prehistoric creatures, spending the majority of their life in the depth of the ocean and only rising from the deep when needed. Others believe however that Godzilla was once just another lizard or reptile, but it's biology was altered due to nuclear bomb testing by use humans.

The first sightings of Godzilla where in Japan, and the name Godzilla that we all know is actually its original Japanese name of *Gojira* angelized into English. Though Godzilla is a reptilian monster (king of the monsters some would say) the original Japanese name of *Gojira* is a combination of the name of two mammals. It comes from the combination of the Japanese *gorira* meaning gorilla, and *kujira* meaning whale. *Gojira* is the "gorilla-whale" as he has the strength and capability to stand upright like a gorilla, and the ability to dive deep into the ocean like a whale.

As well as earthquakes, Godzilla is one of the biggest threats to Japan. Luckily however, he doesn't actually exist. Hey, I never said all the entries in this book need to be real.

BUGS

There'll probably be some entomologists getting angry at this etymologists for this section I'm sure.

As there's a lot of names that the creepy-crawlies in this section go by. Insects, arachnids, arthropods, gastropods. Here they are all going under the one name of bug. Basically, if it's small, has more eyes and legs than you, or makes my skin crawl (bugs aren't a favourite of mine) then you have a bug on your hands! The name bug is of unknown origin to us.

BUTTERFLY

Unlike the dairy cow that is a producer of dairy, butterflies do not make butter, which is rather disappointing. The name has roots in the Old English *buterfleoge* which means butterfly. This name is literally thought to be merely a compound of butter and fly, but why? Why on earth was this insect named after butter?

One theory is because of the colouring of their wings. Like I said butterfly is an Old English word and some of the most common butterflies in England are ones with yellow wings, butter is too yellow, and butterflies fly. So butter and flying kind of just went together. Why looking for yellow things to name it after they chose butter however is beyond me. It could be linked with buttercup flowers, but that's just my own idea. There are plenty more beautiful things in this world that are yellow

than butter; imagine if they were named sunflies for sunflowers instead?

The butter name may not relate to their colour though. One story goes that butterflies were thought to actually be witches that transformed into the bugs. They shifted into this shape so they could steal things from villages like milk and, you've guessed it, butter.

The funniest idea however is that the name was originally a flutter-by but over time the name got mixed up. The butterfly flutters by.

LADYBUG

It makes my British bones shiver having to write ladybug, as here in England we call them ladybirds (which is actually a far more nonsensical name) but neither of these are their actual name. Their actual name is coccinellidae. This name is far more boring, simply coming from the Latin *coccineus* meaning scarlet for their shells. Yet it is far more accurate as ladybugs/birds are neither birds nor "true-bugs" and they aren't all ladies.

The bug/bird part has no definitive answer to us (they fly like birds and look like bugs) but the lady part of their name is far more interesting. Ladybugs aren't named after all ladies, but rather one specific lady. That lady being the Virgin Mary. They were donned "our lady's bird" in Europe, which changed to bug across the pond, due to their red shell being like the red cloak

that the Virgin Mary is so often seen wearing. With the seven spots commonly seen on ladybugs supposedly representing the seven joys and seven sorrows of Mary.

Yet I also hear you asking “Isn’t Mary always wearing blue? Not red?” and this in itself opens up a super interesting piece of history! Nowadays we see Mary more or less always in blue. Yet blue paint in the past was incredibly hard to come by, so she was painted with red instead. It was only when lapis lazuli stone was discovered in Afghanistan that Mary started wearing more and more blue. This rare stone created a paint the shade of blue so beautiful, and never seen before, that many renaissance painters used it to honour the mother of Jesus. Though not in any way related to know ladybugs got their name, this piece of history is far too exciting to not mention. Imagine living in a time when a new shade of blue was discovered?!

BULLET ANT

You would think the most painful sting in the world would belong to some horrible wasp, or a scorpion straight from hell itself. The honour of most painful string from a bug however belongs to an ant. Yes, one of those things that raid your tent or live in a glass farm on your window own the title of most painful sting. It’s not exactly that common kind of ant that will deal the damage though. It’s a more specific kind of ant: the bullet ant.

Ant simply comes from the Old English æmette but what makes this ant a bullet? Is it as fast as a bullet? Is it made of metal like a bullet? Well no. It's called a bullet ant due to the pain from its aforementioned sting. A sting so painful that when you get stung it feels very much like you have been shot by a bullet.

These ants are native to South America and in there they are also known as the Venezuelan *hormiga veinticuatro* which means the "twenty-four-hour ant." This name once again relates to the pain of its sting, as in you'll be in pain for twenty-four hours after you get stung by it. More morbidly the twenty-four hours in this name relates to how long it can take to kill you if stung, luckily however bullet ant stings can only kill if you're allergic in the first place.

A much less scary name for these ants is their scientific name *paraponera clavata,* which means "near ponera" (another type of ant) and "club shaped." Wait club shaped? Yes even its scientific name is related to a weapon.

TARANTULA

It's hard to believe sometimes that these things are even bugs—they have fangs, they're covered in hair, and some of them even feed on birds and small mammals. You could say they are somewhat wolf-like, and wolves even play a part in how these creatures got their name.

The first known spider to be donned with the name tarantula isn't technically a tarantula. It was named first to a spider found in a town in the south of Italy, this town being called Taranto. The people of this town named the spider after their town, calling them *tarantola*. Which turned into tarantula in the English speaking world. Like I said these guys aren't technically tarantulas but they still bear that name nowadays being called *lycosa tarantula,* but more commonly known as European Wolf Spiders. As they are seriously wolf-like in appearance.

Though this *lycosa tarantula* caused quite the uproar when it was first discovered in Italy. People were scared that when they were bit, they would contract an illness they called tarantism which would result in hysteria, then death. It was believed that the only way to be cured of this illness was to take part in an uncontrollable, frenzied-like dance, that they called the tarantella. Of course we know now that a bite from these guys are more or less ineffective to humans, but if you ever get bit by one still feel free to dance.

This name of tarantula became associated with the tarantulas of today when Europeans started settling in Central and South America. While it was mainly the Spanish who were the first to settle the Americas there would have been Italians on board their ships too. When these Italians saw the monstrous spiders that lived in the Americas they named them after the monstrous spiders they had back in Italy, tarantulas.

PRAYING MANTIS

When you first see these insects and hear their name you might think they are "prey-ing" mantises due to how these bugs hunt and kill their prey. In fact they have been seen taking down birds bigger than them! However their name doesn't come from their aggressive nature, but more their serene posture. When standing idle praying mantises hold their front legs/arms/claw things up right, like they are praying, hence why they are praying mantises, not preying mantises.

What about the non-praying part of their name, mantis? This too like praying has spiritual roots. This name was taken more or less directly from the Greek *mantis* which means "one who is divine" or even just "prophet" which once again comes from the praying posture of these guys. This Greek word of *mantis* comes from *mainesthai* which means "be inspired" which comes from *menos* meaning "passion" and "spirit." There is something oddly mystic with these bugs. From their mystical appearance to even the way they move so slowly and delicately. It's as if they are practicing tai-chi or something.

BUMBLEBEE

There are many kinds of bees on our planet. From honey bees to carpenter bees to leaf-cutter bees. The bee we are looking into here however is the most adorably named of them all, the bumble bee. Now the name bee is actually not of huge interest. All we know of it is that it comes

from the Old English *beo*. Yet what is of more interested is the first part of their name, bumble, and the interesting societies that bees (including bumblebees) live in, and the names we give to the three members of bee society.

Bumblebees don't live in as big societies as honey bees, but honey bees is a far duller name. Bumblebees usually live with 40–500 other bees as opposed to the up to 60,000 honey bees live in. And honey bees do dances to communicate with fellow bees, while bumblebees don't do such a thing. And of course bumblebees are the fatter, furries, cuter bees. The three members of bee society are called the queen, worker, and drone.

There is only one queen per colony. They're called queens because they are the highest rank bee in the colony, and they're female, there's no such thing as a king bee. The main goal of the queen bee is to reproduce, as she is the only female bee in a colony that can do so. Worker bees are called so as they are the bees that are doing all the hard work in the hive. They are usually the sexually undeveloped females that care for the queen, help build the hive, and hunt out nectar, pollen, and water to bring back to the hive. Finally the drone bees, they are named this as they are more or less mindless male drone bees that exist for one reason only—sex! The sole job of the drone bee is to fertilize the eggs of the queen, I'm sure it's a tough career. This is but an insight into the crazy, almost human-like, society that is going on in bee hives.

So what about the "bumble" of the bumblebee? Well I am sure you can figure out that this bumble is something of an onomatopoeic word. Supposedly due to the sound

they make as they fly around. They didn't however always have this name. In the time of Charles Darwin, when talking about these types of bees he called them "humblebees" though this name had nothing to do with how modest they were, but it was also to do with the sound they make. Darwin thought that as they flew they hummed. This name eventually and overtime changed to "bumble" with one of the key moments of the humble-bumble conversion came in Beatrix Potter's 1910 story "Tale of Mrs. Tittlemouse" when one of the black and yellow winged insect pests in her home is called "Babbitty Bumble."

And of course, the Old English name for a bumblebee is a *dumbledore*. A name that was given to a certain wizard headmaster due to how often he was seen humming to himself and pottering around the school halls.

DADDY LONG-LEGS

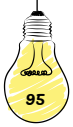
So it turns out there are actually a few different species of bugs that are referred to as daddy longlegs. There's the opiliones which is also known as harvestmen, the pholcidae which are also known as cellar spiders, and Crane Flies. Yet regardless of what bug you think of when you hear the name daddy longlegs, how did these creepy bugs get an oddly charming name?

Well here's the shocking part, are you ready for this? Daddy longlegs...have long legs! Who saw that coming?! While that explains the "longlegs" part of their name, it doesn't explain why we call them daddy. Honestly, we

unfortunately don't seem to have any answers as to why they ended up with the daddy prefix. The only link we might have is from a novel of all places. The 1912 Jean Webster novel which is also called "*Daddy-Long-Legs*" but aside from that, the odd name of these odd guys is a mystery,

BLACK WIDOW SPIDER

Aside from tarantulas, the black widow spider is perhaps the most well-known of all spiders. While black widow spiders are far smaller than any tarantula, their venomous bite can cause serious pain to any human including nausea, aching muscles, and paralysing your diaphragm, making it difficult to breath! Luckily death from a black widow bite isn't too common, but still don't go running out looking for one to bite you.



There are many kinds of widow spider, so of course one of the defining features of the black widow is it's black colouring, and it's this black colouring they are named after. The black widow spider is more or less completely black in colour, all black but the well-known red marking on their abdomen.

So why are they called widows? Well no it's not because these spiders have mastered the act of marriage (and in turn they've all ended in death) no, not at all. It's actually more gruesome than that. While not every time, female black widows have the *delightful* habit of killing and eating their male mate once they are done doing their business, hence why they are known as widows! So if

you ever see a black widow spider and feel sorry for it due to its marital status, you shouldn't worry too much.

CENTIPEDE AND MILLIPEDE

Let's cover both these guys here as not only are they very similar in appearance, but their names are very similar too. Both names refer to the huge amount of legs that these creatures have. With the "pede" part of their name that they both share comes from the Latin *pes* which means "foot." *Pes* might sound nothing like our word for feet, but it's actually a word that still has a fair bit of use in modern times in things relating to feet. While you might still be confused it makes more sense when we see the Latin *pedo* which comes from *pes* and means "relating to feet." This can be seen with what we call a relaxing treatment for our feet, a pedicure, and for the machine we use to keep track of our steps, a pedometer. While not directly related to centipedes and millipedes, I find it so amazing that such ancient words are still in use today. But maybe that's just me.

The former part of their names however relate to the number of legs each one has, or well supposedly has. The centipede was thought to have one hundred legs, in fact they can have anywhere between 30 to over 300 legs, so it got a name referencing the Latin word for 100, *centum*. This word too can still be seen in use with what we call 100 years of time passing, a century. The millipede's name comes from the Latin *mille* which to our modern ears might sound like it means a million, but in fact it means 1,000. Like we see in the term millennium.

Though at max a millipede has about 750 legs, so I guess they should really be called a three-quarters-to-a-millipede instead.

DUNG BEETLE

No, unfortunately this isn't a nickname that most people refer to them as; this type of beetle's name is officially dung beetle. I mean I would feel sorrier for it, but to be honest they seem to enjoy rolling around feces all day, so whatever makes them happy I guess. It's due to this knack they have of rolling up feces into balls as to why they are called dung beetles. You know the more I think about this name, and the more I think about the many words the English language has blessed us with for feces, the dung beetle actually got off pretty lightly.

The name beetle actually more or less means biter, coming from the Old English *bitela*. Dung too is a word of Old English origin, but unlike how *bitela* became beetle, dung just stayed as dung. Though something I find of interest (and this is all completely my own theory) is related to Old English word, *dunn*. *Dunn* was, and still is, a murky shade of greyish brown. It's where the name Duncan comes from, which means Brown Warrior, and where the name donkey originates from, as donkeys are a murky greyish brownish shade. Perhaps this brown murky *dunn* colour was the inspiration behind the word dung, which is too brown and murky.

FISH & AQUATIC LIFE

Finally on our etymological safari let's leave the earth and sky behind us and dive into the names of the fish and many other creatures that live in our waters. Though technically I have already covered a couple of these, crocodiles live in water but they are in the reptile section, and the sperm whale lives in the ocean but that was in the mammal section! I'm full of lies. The word fish anyhow doesn't have a particularly clear origin to us, all we know for sure is that it the name has remained relatively unchanged for a very long time, being traced back to the proto-Indo-European word *pisk* which to be honest, isn't a stone's throw away from what we call these gilled wonders today.

SALMON

Is there a story in nature more beautiful and poetic than that of the salmon's? They are born in streams, grow up and live in oceans the for some time. Then when it's time to mate, salmons somehow find their way back to the streams and riverbeds they were laid and hatched in. During this epic trek from ocean to stream the salmons will stop eating, and do all they can to reach their home. Once here the salmons mate, which usually includes males fighting for dominance, reproducing with each other, and once that new life has been laid, die. There's few other stories in nature quite like theirs.

One of the most well-known things that salmon do during their journeys home is jump upstream! They can be seen leaping drops in the river. Sometimes rather unfortunately (though quite comical at times) perfectly in the mouths of awaiting bears! Salmon really made it easy for bears; I wish we had food that would just jump into our mouths. It's from these wonderful leaps we get their name salmon from. Coming from their Latin name *salmonem* which means "a leaper" which comes from the Latin *salire* which means "to leap."

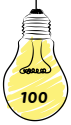
CLOWNFISH

Clownfish are rather funny fish (I am totally not sorry for doing that) as when the female clownfish of the group dies, one of the males will change sex to become the head female. I'll let you decide if you think humans should be able to do this or not. They come a variety of colours too. Most well-known are the orange with white and black stripes, but the range can instead be red, yellow, black, and even pink. It is because of these bright and colourful patterns as to why they became known as clownfish, as clowns tend to wear bright and colourful clothing. Luckily clownfish aren't as scary as clown humans, though if you're a professional clown reading this I'm sorry, I'm sure you're a lovely person.

Clownfish also go by another name: anemonefish. This is because of the unique relationships that clownfish and sea anemones form. While sea anemones might seem like nothing more than dancing underwater flowers, they are certainly clever enough to become BFFs

with clownfish. Clownfish and sea anemones from a relationship that benefit both of them. Not only are they happy in these relationships, they are instrumental for each other's survival. Anemones use clownfish to clean them and eat their dead tentacles, while clownfish get to eat the sea anemones leftover food and even use their stinging tentacles as protection from other predators. Clownfish can even live in sea anemones, it's the perfect relationship! I hope you can have a relationship with your significant other as good as the ones between clownfish and sea anemones.

Speaking of clownfish living in sea anemones, we must talk about the most famous clownfish of them all, Nemo. The name Nemo means "nobody" which represents how alone little Nemo would be stuck in the sea. He was named after the Jules Verne character who too was often in perilous underwater escapades. Captain Nemo.



DOGFISH

Now I get why catfish are named that, they tend to not form huge social groups or schools like cats, have whiskers, and are even known to make somewhat of a purring sound when they are taken from the water. But what I don't understand, is why on earth do we have a type of fish called a dogfish?

They don't bark like dogs, and you probably wouldn't want to cuddle up with one on our lap. They earned this name for a more wolf like tendency they have as opposed to any kind of tendency they might have with

your own dog. Dogfish are said to hunt in packs like actual dogs and wolves. What's also interesting about the name is that it might be inspired by how they are when fishing for them. In the fishing world dogfish are well known for more or less eating any kind of bait on offer at the end of a fisher's hook. This eating habit of eating literally whatever they can find, reminds me of dogs too. Especially my own dogs as they give me the cute eyes while I'm eating my lunch.

LOBSTER

Perhaps one of the stranger creatures that live on our sea floors and go on our dinner plates. They are a type of crustacean and many scientist believe that lobsters are actually biologically immortal, with their only way of dying is by being killed by other animals, us putting them in a boiling pot of water included. With their eyes on stalks and with scuttling legs, lobsters are like underwater bugs. It would seem the Romans thought they were rather bug-like when naming them too.

In Latin these guys were called *locusta,* but we don't know where this name came from originally. Of course that doesn't mean we are done with this creature, it'd be pretty boring otherwise. What's so interesting about this name is that another creature on this planet had the exact same name as the lobster in Roman times, the locust. Yes Romans called locusts *locusta* too and their modern name is much more like their Latin name when compared with the lobster. Lobsters and locusts

are rather similar I suppose; thankfully however lobsters can't fly or cause havoc and swarm plagues in Egypt.

What is also of interest is despite the Latin *locusta* looking more like the name locust, it was actually a name first given to lobsters. So locusts are more the lobster of then land than the lobster being the locust of the sea.

OCEAN SUNFISH

Ocean sunfish are one of my favourite fish. With their unique look and relaxed temperament it's hard to dislike these fish. One thing that can't be understated about these fish is just how big they are, due to their abnormal shape they can be just a tall as they are long. In fact they are the heaviest bony fish in the world. While there are bigger and heavier fish they have skeletons of cartilage not bones, more on one of those later.

While the "ocean" and "fish" part of their name are pretty easy to understand, what makes these fish related to the Sun? Well the first idea that might come to your head is because of their round shape and fins making them look somewhat like the classic drawing of the Sun with beams coming out of it. While this is a factor into their name they are named after the Sun due to how much they love the Sun. They can be seen spending hours every day floating flat on the surface of the ocean, basking in the sunshine. These huge fish can even been seen leaping out of the ocean like dolphins, it's quite the unexpected

sight. They enjoy sunbathing so much to help regulate their body temperature.

Their odd shape however helps form their name in other languages. Such as in German they are called *mondfisch* meaning “moon fish” owing to their lunar shaping. In German they are also known as *schwimmender kopf* and in Polish called *samogłów* which mean “swimming head” and “head alone” respectively due to the fact that these fish look like nothing more than just a head with fins swimming around the ocean.

A more scientific name for these beauties is *mola mola* with this name not coming from their shape or their bathing habits, but rather due to the colour and texture of their body. The name *mola mola* comes from the Latin word for “millstone.” As their bodies are grey and rough, like millstones. Though millstones are pretty round too.

PORTUGUESE MAN O' WAR

While their name can be spelt man-of-war too, officially it’s “o’” and I am not going to pass up on writing o’ instead of “of.” These are truly some of the most bizarre creatures to not only live in our sea, but on our planet as a whole. While one Portuguese man o’ war might look like a jellyfish (truth be told they aren’t that distantly related to jellyfish) they aren’t actually jellyfish, in fact they technically aren’t even one animal.

A Portuguese man o’ war is actually a collection of single cell organisms, fused together to work as one

cohesive unit. These colonies are also well known for their incredibly powerful stings, which it uses to capture, kill, and feed on small fish and shrimp. So as beautiful and intriguing as these creature might seem. If you see one wash up on the shore or floating along the sea keep some distance.

Their name might sound just as deadly as they are, and while I'm sure it played a factor in their naming, it is more their shape that they are named after. Man o' war is a British naval term for a powerful warship in naval combat, used during the sixteenth to nineteenth century. When these creatures were sighted it was thought that they looked like a Portuguese man-of-war ship at full sail, so they were named after them.

Interestingly there is a fish called a man-of-war fish too. While these little guys look nothing like a warship. They have this name as they are one of the few fish completely immune to the sting of the Portuguese man o' war. Perhaps the best thing about the Portuguese man o' war is that it has the nickname "the floating terror" due to its sting. Making it the only animal to have a name that sounds like a cheesy '50s horror movie.

MARLIN

Wait, didn't we already talk about clownfish? As well as Nemo we have Marlin in that film too, but marlin is actually the name of a whole different kind of fish. These marlins are far bigger than clownfish, and have long pointed noses, however despite the similarities they are

not swordfish, though closely related. Marlins are huge, beautiful, fast, and apparently rather tasty, because of this they are prized in the fishing world. While they are more often found in oceans you will most likely see them in the magazine aisle on the cover of the fishing magazine your dad probably buys.

As we said they are not swordfish, but as swordfish are named after swords marlins too have something of the same etymological story. Named after a different long, pronged, object. They were originally called marlinspike fish and overtime this name has become just marlin. A marlinspike is a tool used by sailors for a variety of reasons, they often look like oversized sewing needles, and they are often used with fabrics too. Their most common use is with breaking apart knots on sails and can even be used to help tie knots back together. They can even be used as makeshift weapons against anyone or anything that might attack you in the open waters! When sailors saw the long noses of the fish, they thought they looked like the marlinspike tool they carried with them, so named them in conjunction.

MANTA RAY

There are many kinds of rays in our oceans. All sharing the common flat wide body shape, we have the electric ray that is capable of an electric discharge of up 220 volts! The stingray that sting can pack a powerful, unfortunately sometimes fatal, punch. But the ray we are looking at today is the largest of all the rays, the manta ray.

The latter half of their name, ray, is common amongst all types of rays. However there isn't much to say about it, all we know is that it comes from the Latin *raia* which is of unknown origin. This is where I go into a bit of my own theorizing, as ray has a second meaning, as in a ray of light. This version of ray comes from the Latin *radius* and of course now radius has other meaning. A mathematical term for measuring the distance from the center to the edge of a circle. It could be thought that rays due to their body shape have quite a large radius, though this is all just my own wild speculation.

That's more than enough for me theorizing though, let's get back into the world of facts. The manta part of their name is of Spanish/Portuguese origin from their word *mantle*. A *mantle* is a long cloak or blanket worn across your shoulders to cover your body. The huge "wings" of the manta ray were seen to be similar to the cloak, so they were named after it. Also a *manta* was a type of cloak trap that were used to catch these fish, so it's possible they were named for this reason too.

Manta Rays are also (unfairly) known as devilfish. This is due to the two fins they have protruding at the front of their mouths. That many thought resemble the satanic horns of Beelzebub himself!

DUMBO OCTOPUS

In the deepest depths of our oceans, far below where sunlight can even penetrate, live creatures that have had to find others ways to survive due to the lack of sunlight.

Some of these creatures are pure terrifying nightmare fuel. From the anglerfish to the goblin shark, the barreleye fish with a transparent head! Luckily however this creature is far from scary, in fact, they're rather cute.

It's pretty easy to understand where the name octopus comes from just by looking at it. Originally in Greek their name was *oktopous* which comes from the Greek *okto* meaning "eight" and *pous* meaning "foot" as these creatures have eight feet, well tentacles as we call them more correctly.

Yet the Dumbo Octopus, along with being adorable, have another feature they are known for: large fins on the side of their bodies that help them swim through the ocean depths. These fins on their sides look like oversized ears, the kind of oversized ears that Dumbo the Elephant from the classic animated movie *Dumbo* had. It was the elephant who could fly that the Dumbo Elephant was named after.

GREAT WHITE SHARK

Great. White. Shark. Are there three other words in the English language that conjure equal amounts of fear and awe? These underwater titans have evolved to be perfect hunting machines, being able to weigh over 5,000 pounds and growing up to 20 feet in length. As they say in Jaws, "All this machine does is swim and eat and make little sharks." But despite the reputation that great white sharks have been given, they aren't as mean as they have been made out to be. In an average year

sharks kill little more than a dozen humans. Of course all human deaths suck, but compared to the estimated 100 million sharks killed by humans a year, it's a fairly small number.

The name shark has somewhat of a murky history. The most popular theory is that it comes from the Mayan word *xoc,* which is pronounced like schock. We don't however know where this word comes from, or exactly what it means. Some believe that this ancient Mayan word meant shark specifically, while others feel that the word related to all large aquatic animals, including crocodiles and whales. Evidence for it meaning just shark are seen in Mayan terms like *xoc yee halal* which were a type of arrow pointed with shark teeth, and *uayab xoc* which was thought to be some sort of demon half-man, half shark creature.

The second idea of where the word shark comes from is of Saxon origin with their word *scearan* which is thought to mean "cut to pieces" as well, sharks are pretty darn good at cutting things to pieces. This led to sharks being defined in the dictionary as a "shifting knave" with knave being a term for a rogue, troublesome person. It's not too far of a stretch to see the words "shifting" and "knave" come together to eventually evolve into shark.

So what about the "great white" part of their name? Well there isn't really much to it. They are great in size, and have a fair amount of white on them. Sure there are more interestingly named sharks in the ocean, but I couldn't pass up on talking about this majestic creature.

Historic Titles

Throughout history there have been many people (normally monarchs or leaders) that have earned nicknames and titles. These can take many forms but the ones we are going to look into are titles that take the form of "someone the something" if that makes sense? I'm sure it will once we get into this. Some of these titles have been earned due to the heroic and amazing feats they achieved throughout their life. While some of these names have been earned for...less flattering reasons. Let's look at how some interesting people earned their interesting title.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT

Alexander the Great was King of Macedonia between 336 BC to 323 BC (I always forget BC years go backwards) and during his just over ten years of rule he did a huge amount of things that earned him that title of great.

He was considered to be worthy of the title great from an early age; his father Phillip chose none other than perhaps the most famous philosopher of all time, Aristotle, to be his son's personal tutor. He was the only one who could mount and tame the wild horse Bucephalus that his father brought, not through strength however but through wits. Alexander realised that this horse was merely afraid of its own shadow (yes, it's believed that's where the phrase comes from) so all he did was turn the horse, so it was facing the Sun. He also solved the mystery of the Gordian Knot. A knot that was

deemed unable to untangle. Alexander saw others fail to untie it so he simply sliced it down the middle. This has since become a fable for thinking outside the box.

Yet perhaps the key thing that truly made him great was his military prowess. In fifteen years of conquest, Alexander never lost a single battle. His military tactics were so good they are still studies in the military to this day! In fact his death remains somewhat of a mystery; some say he died of natural causes and some say he was poisoned! Either way he died at just thirty-two years old, but had done enough in his short life to earn himself the title of great.

CATHERINE THE GREAT

Aside from Alexander, many others have been blessed with the title of great throughout history. Including this wonderful woman of history, Catherine the Great. Catherine the Great was the longest reigning female monarch in Russian history. But while she was most certainly great, that's perhaps the only truthful part of her title. First off she wasn't actually Russian, and she wasn't even called Catherine!

She was actually born in Prussia (yes it's just a coincidence that it sounds like Russia) in 1729 as Princess Sophia of Anhalt-Żerbst. It was when she married Peter III of Russia (who wasn't king when they were wed) that she started her ascent as ruler of all of Russia and took on the name Catherine while Peter was Tsar and Catherine was just his empress wife. He wasn't the best of Tsars to

say the least. Poorly educated and very unpopular, he was the polar opposite of his well-educated, ambitious wife. Stories claim that Peter had huge amounts of fun in bed with his wife. That fun however being playing with his toy soldiers and making Catherine dress up in army gear to get involved too, what kind of bed-based fun did you think I was talking about?

His reign lasted all but six months when he was overthrown. Not overthrown by the working people as we saw later in Russian history but by his very own wife Catherine. The time Peter III spent being a man-child, Catherine had spent reading, educating herself even more, and gaining support in Russia. The Russian people were happy to have her and just her as their ruler as opposed to the idiot that had been ruling the country for the six months before her.

Aside from taking the reins successfully from her imbecile husband, Catherine did many other things to be deemed great. Of course she had the usual success in the military but one of the greater things she did was bless Russia with education and the arts. When she took control of the land, Russia was still seen as a backwards thinking country. Catherine wanted her country to not only be brilliant on the battlefield, but brilliant in the lecture theater too. She opened free schools across Russia as well as a girls only boarding school in St Petersburg, hoping that other young girls could learn to succeed in a male dominating land like she did. She even had theaters opened across Russia so the people could experience and create their own culture. It would not be a stretch to say that if Catherine didn't introduce the arts to Russia,

we wouldn't have the works of people like Tolstoy or Tchaikovsky. Making her a very great woman indeed.

IVAN THE TERRIBLE

The first Tsar of all of Russia! While he might have been "the terrible" his grandfather was actually Ivan the Great. However this Ivan didn't go down the same route as his grandfather, earning himself the title of terrible rather than great.

There is a plethora of things that Ivan did to make him so terrible. His terribleness could be considered to have started in his childhood. His father died when he was just three years old, making Ivan officially leader at that age. It was his widowed mother however that took the reins of power. Locking up everyone who questioned her power, Ivan himself was even locked away as a child, he was a prisoner in his own palace, with one of the few things he did for enjoyment was kill small animals.

With modern eyes it's thought that Ivan most likely had mental health issues. His mind only became more deteriorated with the death of his first wife. This paranoia led to his massacring of the Russian town of Novgorod. Fearing the people of the town were planning to overtake them, he went to the town himself along with his men, killing thousands. To celebrate one victory in battle he ordered the construction of Saint Basil's Cathedral. Once built, he blinded the architects, making sure they couldn't build anything more beautiful. Which is pretty terrible.

The most terrible thing he did however was beating his own son to death with his walking stick in one of his fits of rage! Though it's believed that the moment after he did it he was full of shock and fear for what he had just done, that regret doesn't make up for the terrible actions that had plagued the rest of his life.

TIMUR THE LAME

Born in modern day Uzbekistan in 1336, the history books don't seem to talk as much about poor old Timur as much as other great military figures. He was just as impressive as many other leaders, founding the Timurid Dynasty and conquering huge parts of the Muslim world, Central Asia, and parts of India. His armies are thought to have killed around 17 million people! Which was thought to be around 5 percent of the population of the entire planet at the time. He was so revered that it's believed that when he died in 1405 of an unknown illness they carved an inscription on his tomb that read "When I rise from the dead, the world shall tremble."

It's safe to say that Timur was anything but lame. So how did he end up with this title? Or as it would have been written when he was alive, Tamerlane. Well while now lame is a word more associated with something being uncool or bad (many people might think you're lame for reading this book but you're not!) it actually has an older, different meaning. Lame originally meant someone or something that is unable to walk properly due to an illness or injury. While it's nowhere near as common to refer to a person with walking injuries as

lame in modern times, we still use lame in this sense when we refer to something as being like “a lame duck.”

And it was this version of lame that Timur the Lame was named for. Due to the wear and tear his body and legs had suffered in his many fierce battles and wars. His body was actually found in 1941 by a team of Russian archaeologists. It was found with two healed wounds on his right leg, and two fingers missing on his right hand. If anyone ever calls you lame don’t take it as an insult, take it as if they are referring to you as this military leader. Which actually might be a bit offensive as well.

WILLIAM THE BASTARD/CONQUEROR

Ah yes, this Will actually earned a couple titles for himself, one from jovial childhood bullying, and the other due to his formidable rule. Born in France in 1028, while his father was Duke of Normandy (earning himself the wonderful title of Robert the Magnificent) his mother, Herleva, wasn’t from quite the same heritage. Little is known about how she and William’s father got together, conceived, and birthed a child, but what we do know is that it was out of wedlock! Which, while definitely isn’t an issue at all today, back then having a child while not married was a big issue. Children born out of wedlock were/are called bastards. Hence why William as a child was teased with the name William the Bastard.

The term bastard itself has a pretty interesting etymology, coming from the French *fils de bast* which means a “packsaddle son.” This term of packsaddle son

refers to how while travelling saddles were often used as beds too. With "packsaddle son" implying the son was conceived one something of an improvised bed.

We all know though that William wasn't saddled (see what I did there?) with this name for all his life however, and while he was deemed a bastard he was still the son of the Duke of Normandy. He took over as duke at just eight years old when his father died on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. William grew up as duke in a volatile time in France's history, he ended up forming a close friendship with his distant cousin Edward the Confessor, who was King of England. Edward promised William that the Throne of England was more or less his when he died. But on his deathbed Edward name close ally Harold Godwinson as king instead. Leading William the Bastard into a fury.

William and his men invaded England, which accumulated in the infamous Battle of Hastings when King Harold was killed with an arrow to the eye. Allowing William to become the first Norman King of England, and of course where he got his far less derogatory name from, William the Conqueror, as he had conquered England.

ETHELRED THE UNREADY

I think we all have a friend we could call "the unready." Do you know how many times I have purposely turned up late somewhere as I knew my friend would be late,

and they're still not there?! But what exactly did this king of England do to make him so unready?

Well the unready in his name wasn't due to how long it took him to pick an outfit for holding court in. His name is actually an ancient pun, coming from the Old English Term *unræd* which is thought to have meant a lot of things from things like "evil" and "folly" but the most interesting one of these is it's thought to mean "bad/evil counsel" which works in with his first name of Aethelred which means "noble counsel." Some even think his first name means "well advised" and his nickname comes from the Old English *unreed* which means "poorly advised."

Whichever one you choose to be true, the common theme throughout these names is the effect the people around him played on his reign as king. His royal council were called the Witan. One of his more well-known poor decisions came about when the Danish invaded England. Just as the Danish invaders were starting to settle in England after ravaging the land, Æthelred thought that would be the perfect time to attack the Danish settlers once more. Whether that was his decision or his consoles we don't know, but it really helps us understand just how poor this king's decisions could be at times.

EYSTEIN THE FART

There are few people in history who are known for their ability to fart, perhaps that will change in the future when our ancestors find countless videos online of people

farting and ponder over what this meant in our society. Unfortunately, Eystein the fart wasn't known for the sounds he could make with his bowels either.

Eystein was the ancient Nordic King of Vestfold (now a part of Norway) and gained this crown by marrying the daughter of the previous king of the land. He was recorded with this nickname the fart seemingly just once. In a list of kings in a book called Íslendingabók written by someone called Ari Þorgilsson (who called himself Ari the learned/wise) and we do not know why he was named this here as Ari left no further comment about him.

While some insist that this is just a translation issue, as in Norwegian fart means speed meaning people believe he was actually Eystein the Speed. Yet in the book the name was written in it was written as *fretr* which just means fart in Old Icelandic.

Why Ari called him this really is a mystery. Perhaps Ari just wasn't a fan of this king, so a childish action of name calling has since become a fact of history!

VLADIMIR THE IMPALER

Being impaled certainly isn't a nice thing to have done to you, and I'm sure being the person who did the impaling (the impaler) would not have had the nicest job in the world. So to have that as your title you must have been a pretty villainous individual—enter Vladimir the Impaler.

Vlad III was the prince of Wallachia, a historic region of modern day Romania. But he was believed to have been born in the region next to Wallachia, Transylvania. He became a fierce ruler of this land who (of course) loved to impale his enemies. Heads up things get a little, unsurprisingly, gory. His preferred method of impaling was with the spike in the ground and the torso going either vertically or horizontally through the body. It's believed that he would have mass impalements where thousands of prisoners would be impaled at the same time, worst of all not all of them died immediately, leaving many to just stay there in unimaginable pain before death. One story even tells of an army of the Ottoman Empire fleeing from the outskirts of Targoviste (Vald's capital) at the sight of 20,000 rotting impaled corpses that Vlad had left as a greeting for them. After his death he was titled Vladimir Tepes, meaning Vladimir the Impaler.

Though it might be considered that his surname has become more renown then this nickname, that surname being Dracula. This surname was passed down from his father, but his father (Vlad II) wasn't born with this surname. Vlad II earned this surname when he was inducted into the Order of the Dragon. The surname was originally Dracul, coming from the Old Romanian *drac* meaning dragon. When Vlad III came around he was surnamed "son of Dracul" which was *Drăculea*. Where we get the modern Dracula from. Even in modern Romanian *drac* still has evil connotations meaning devil. And it was of course this name that Bram Stoker used when he needed a name for the evil vampire count who resided in Transylvania. Count Dracula. Though the real

Dracula (despite reportedly being born there) actually had very little to do with Transylvania.

RICHARD THE LIONHEART

Nope Richard I doesn't have this title due to being the first person in history to have a heart transplant with a lion. The first heart transplant was in 1967, and King Richard reigned over England between 1189-1199, so the time scale would be just a tad off.

Lions, despite not being native to England luckily for my own safety, have always been a creature associated with courage, strength, and bravery. They can be seen on the English royal arms and on the football shirt of the English national team. The heart has much importance, being someone "with a lot of heart" has always been seen as a good thing. It's a sign of mental strength and courage. So to have a lion's heart would be a pretty big deal.

And it turns out that King Richard I was a pretty big deal. Though he was only king for ten years (and some sources say he took the throne rather reluctantly) he did a huge amount of battling, spending very little time in England itself and more time fighting overseas. It was for all his courageous victories the French gave him the title *Coeur-de-lion* which means "Lion Heart" and since this king was compared to a lion; lions have held a place of high regard in English history.

BLOODY MARY

Let's break away from the "someone the something" convention to talk about this Queen of England and Ireland. Mary I Queen of England and Ireland wasn't named such because people kept on getting angry with her. Non-British readers might need to ask a Britain friend about that joke, I'm not sure how common it is to shout "bloody" in relation to something that annoys you outside the British Isles.

Bloody Mary earned this nickname thanks to the high amount of blood spilled during her reign. In fact the first deaths ordered by her came about as soon as she took the throne, ordering the execution of her predecessor Lady Jane Grey and her husband for treason. Lady Jane was queen for just nine days before Mary forced her way to the throne. Earning herself a nickname too, the Nine Days' Queen.

But why did Mary have so many people killed? Well for the same reason so many people have died in history—religion. Mary's father King Henry VIII had changed the religion of England from Catholic to Protestant just to get out of a couple marriages. Mary however was fiercely Catholic. Her main aim as queen was to revert the country back to Catholicism. Anyone who refused to change from Catholic to Protestant would be burned at the stake, her preferred method of execution.

In her five-year reign, just shy of three hundred men and women were killed at her order. While that is still way too many people to die, in the grand scheme of

history that isn't that many. Her father alone had around 50,000 people executed. So why is she Bloody Mary but her father not known as Bloody Henry? This nickname came to be once her rule had ended when England was under rule by the much more popular Queen Elizabeth. Mary's Spanish widow Philip wanted to stay in control of England so proposed marriage to Elizabeth. The fact that Elizabeth is known as the Virgin Queen should let you know how that went down. Angered by her rejection, Philip launched the Spanish armada to attack England, only to be defeated by the English navy.

After this comedy of errors, the former King Philip was loathed by the public, he and his dead wife Mary were dragged through the mud of English. Landing her with the title, Bloody Mary. While the real Bloody Mary may be gone, she lives on with a blood red cocktail possibly named after her and a folklore ritual in her honour. You've definitely read her name three times while reading this, you're not in front of a mirror are you?

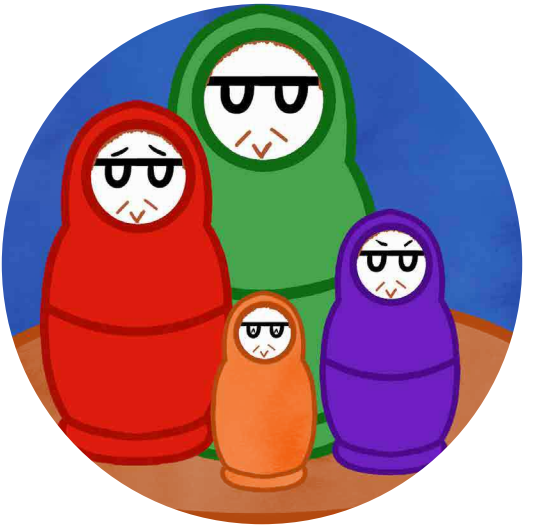
IVAYLO THE CABBAGE

The part of my brain that wants to keep this book neat and ordered wants each section to be made up of a unit of ten entries, but here we have eleven because I couldn't leave out Ivaylo the Cabbage! When he was born Ivaylo was nothing more than a humble Bulgarian peasant. Yet he knew that there was much more in life in store for him then the downtrodden life of a peasant in Bulgaria during the 1200s. Fed up of the way that the higher classes of Bulgaria were treating the lower classes,

Ivaylo started a peasant uprising. Reaching the point where the ruling class couldn't out power him, leading him to become Tsar of Bulgaria! Although it was just for around a year.

He is more commonly known in history as Ivaylo of Bulgaria, but this nickname of "the cabbage" has remained popular too. He was given this title to reflect his humble beginning as a mere peasant, who I am sure would have eaten a lot of, perhaps only, cabbage.

Objects & Possessions



You know I really struggled with figuring out what to name this section of the book. Things? Stuff? Knick-knacks? In the end I went with "objects & possessions" as I feel that was the most sensible name, but what does this mean and what will be in this section? Well, all kinds of stuff. Things you can hold in your hand, things you can sit on, things you can put inside of other things, and as the sections title, things you can possess.. In my eyes, the defining feature of an object is that it was constructed by humans, not something found in nature. Though that doesn't completely line up with the dictionary definition of an object.

OTTOMAN

Ottomans are strange pieces of furniture. They're sort of a mid-way point between a couch, a bed, and a table. What's even more strange about them is their name, which they share with the former empire that originated from Turkey, the Ottoman Empire.

The ottoman as we know it today originally did come from Turkey during the period of the Ottoman Empire where they were much larger than we know them today. Initially ottomans were so big, they were pushed up right next to the wall of a room to act as a long bench. Yet they started to be built smaller and smaller so they could fit snugly in the corner of the room, where they wait patiently until someone's rear end needs to sit down.

It was in this dwarfed form they were exported all around Europe, and European butts fell in love with them. Which lead to them being named after where they came from, the ottoman.

UKULELE

From the shores of Hawaii, to the music halls of Britain, to that weird spike in popularity they had in the mid-to-late 2000s. Is there a happier sounding musical instrument than the ukulele? Although most commonly associated with Hawaii, the instrument's roots actually go back to a different set of islands: the Madeira Islands of Portugal. A popular string instrument here was called the machete (nothing to do with the knife as far as I could see) and was too a small guitar-like instrument. Portuguese immigrants brought the instrument with them when they settled on the island paradise of Hawaii. The natives of the island enjoyed the instrument so much that they made their own variation of it, the modern ukulele as we know it today.

The instrument already had a name, so why did the Hawaiians give their variation of it the name ukulele? This name is meant to represent the way your fingers move around the fretboard while playing it. As the name comes from the Hawaiian *"uku"* which means "flea" and *lele* which means "to fly, jump, or leap" as if your fingers are a little flea hopping around the strings and the fretboard as you play.

AQUARIUM

I guess the better name for these objects would be a fish tank, or even a fish bowl. As the name aquarium relates more to the buildings where you see many fish tanks full of life. But if you went into a pet shop and asked for an aquarium I'm sure they'll know what you mean.

The name aquarium exists thanks to an item that came before it, a vivarium. Vivariums are the kind of tanks you keep non-water-based pets in, like reptiles and bugs. Vivarium comes from the Latin *vivus* which means "living" and the "rium" suffix is an often seen part of language, relating to a location that houses things, like an auditorium or a planetarium.

But when it came to house life that lived in water, a normal vivarium wouldn't suffice. So one that could be filled with water and house fish was created with a different name, replacing the "viva" of vivarium with the Latin *aquarius* which means "water."

Interestingly aquarium did have an older different meaning. Not so much as an artificial life for fish to sit on your shelf but meaning simply "a drinking place for cattle" which would be a man-made pond for cows to drink out of.

PAMPHLET

I'm sure you have way too many of these fly through your letterbox, most of the time useless and boring, their etymology however isn't quite as boring.

These little flyers have one love poem to thank for their name. This poem being "*Pamphilus de amore*" meaning "Pamphilus, or about love." This poem while written in Latin is believed to be of French origin, and the poet behind this poem seems to be something of a mystery too. Nevertheless the poem was insanely popular in the Middle Ages. Being printed out on little bits of paper and passed around so everyone could read them. Imagine a very old, nowhere near as funny meme. This poems name was shortened to just *Pamphilus* and eventually became the name we all call these little informational pieces of paper, pamphlets.

BIDET

The source of confusion and amusement to countless tourists visiting Europe for years now. The bidet isn't a secondary toilet (seriously, please don't use it as a toilet) but rather a cleaning machine. While we think of most cleaning contraptions as things that clean your dishes or you clothing, the bidet is meant for cleaning your...private area, shall we say politely?

The name for these scrotum scrubbers (sorry, I couldn't resist) is very bizarre, as bidet is also a word for pony

in French. The actual breed of small horse from France called the Bidet is unfortunately now extinct. The first-ever cleaning bidets were very primitive and not the fancy things we see today. They were merely holes in the ground; you would have to squat and straddle over and then let them work their magic. It was due to the action of straddling over them as to why they got their name, as the action of straddling over a bidet washer was much like straddling over a bidet pony to ride it.

COMPUTER

In the grand scheme of the history of our galaxy, humans are a pretty recent development, so you can only imagine just how recent the creation of the computer as we know it is. While we still might think of computers as being fairly new (Microsoft Windows is only just over thirty years old) computers actually go much further than our current idea of them, like the ones that sit on our laps or live in our pockets. And the name "computer" goes back even further.

It's hard to pinpoint what exactly was the first computer. Some argue it was the Jacquard Loom of 1801, who created an attachment to a normal loom to automate some procedures. While others think it was Charles Babbage and his idea of the Difference Engine in 1822, though he designed the machine, he never actually was able to construct it. Then there's the popular notion of the true "first computer" Bombe made by Alan Turing to help crack codes of the Germans during World War II. Before the war, Turing had always had theories about

machines that you could enter equations into and it would solve them. Different machines for different needs, and that one day there could be a "Universal Machine" that could do all the tasks of all the previous machines. Sound familiar? It could be argued that Alan Turing is the father of the modern computer as we know it.

But computers existed before computers as we know them—they were not devices in our pockets or beige boxes on desks, they were people. A computer in this sense was a person who was able to do calculations and figure out complex mathematical issues. Computer in this sense dates back to the 1640s! This noun of computer comes from the verb "compute" which is even older dating back to the Latin *computare* which means "to count, sum up, reckon together" with the *com* part being "with, together" and the *putare* part meaning "to reckon."

While computers seem like rather new creations, their name was lifted from a word that is hundreds, if not thousands, of years old.

FENCE

Fences come in many shapes and sizes, like the simple garden fence to the Dingo Fence of Australia, built to stop the pestering dingoes from getting into South East Australia. At over 5,000 kilometers long it's the longest fence in the world. New Zealand even has a toothbrush fence where people from all over the world come to tie their toothbrush too it. Like the love lock bridge of Paris but far more New Zealand.

While fences might seem well...a tad boring, their etymology is awesome, and it's one of those things that when you hear it you'll put your hand on your face and go "of course it is." What are fences for? Looking pretty? Yes. Peering over into the neighbour's garden to hear the gossip on the street? Yes. But most importantly, stopping people from getting into your property. Fences are made for deFENCE against your house, and their name is simply a shortening of defence. How painstakingly obvious is that when you hear it? The fence is used for defence.

GRANDFATHER CLOCK

These geriatric timekeepers weren't originally called grandfather clocks, but rather Longcase Clocks as they have a long case for all their mechanisms. We all think of grandfather clocks as being something primarily owned by the older generation, but they aren't named this due to this. In fact we have a song from 1876 to thank for the name of these clocks.

The story goes that songwriter Henry Clay Work was staying in North Yorkshire, England, from America. In the lobby of the hotel he was staying at stood a grand, tall, but broken clock. When he asked the staff of the hotel about it they explained to him that the clock was owned by the Jenkins brothers, the two brother who previously ran the hotel. Yet when the first brother died the clock started having troubles, and when the second brother died the clock stopped to the minute! Whether this story is true or not we don't know, though it sounds rather

fictitious. The songwriter, Henry Clay Work, regardless of if the story was true or not loved it. He loved it so much so that he wrote a song about the story, and that song is called "My Grandfather's Clock." The song was a huge success being sold as sheet music in millions. With the popularity of this song the term long case clock was more or less dropped all together and Grandfather Clock had taken its place.

What about the clock part of the name then? Well there's no song based story behind clocks etymology, it comes from the Medieval Latin *clocca* which means "bell" as bells and clocks have always gone hand in hand.

MATRYOSHKA DOLL

These tiny ladies go by a collection of different names. Nesting Dolls, Russian Dolls, Stacking Dolls, and while they do stack, nest, and are from Russia, their actual name is Matryoshka Dolls. Although these dolls have become one of the most iconic things to come out of Russia they are nowhere near as old as the country itself, in fact we know the exact date and by who the first ever set of Matryoshka Dolls were created by.

They were built in 1890, designed by Sergey Malyutin and carved out of wood by Vasily Zvyozdochkin. But why did they give them this odd name? Well while it might seem odd to English speakers like myself, matryoshka is actually a common word in Russian. It means "little matron" as the dolls traditionally were always small *babushka* Russian ladies. Matryoshka also became the

Russian given names of Matryona and Matriosha, which were common female names in the world of Russian peasantry. The Latin root of the word is *mater,* which mean "mother" just to add to the motherly vibe these dolls give off.

Nowadays these dolls come in all sort of designs, from world leaders to the members of the Beatles. Yet their name will always be a reminded or their feminine origins.

MORTGAGE

Is a mortgage an object or a possession? I mean I guess the paperwork that comes with a mortgage is an object, and having one leads to having a house, which is a pretty big possession. I couldn't skip on mentioning mortgages though as they have such a great etymology.

Mortgage is a French word. It's a combination of two Old French words, *mort* meaning "death" and *gage* meaning "pledge." Yep signing a mortgage means you are signing a death pledge. It was named this as a mortgage only ends when the loan has been paid off, or when you die. So if you are of the age when you are thinking about getting a mortgage, please don't let this grizzly etymology sway your decision.

Also just an extra fun fact, this Old French word of *mort* can be seen at the end of the name of the Dark Lord himself Voldemort. Whose name in French means "flight of death." So yes, getting a mortgage *pretty much* means

you're an evil wizard. I guess I might be being a little hyperbolical there though.

Food

Food, glorious food! The human race has created so many amazing things that we can shove into our mouths. From cultivating nature's bounty, to mixing ingredients together to create whole new concoctions, food has never been more amazing than it is now. Let's take a look at some of the things that over the years have lined our stomachs and (if you haven't guessed by now) see how they got their names.

HAMBURGER

Hamburgers are enjoyed all around the world. There are very few places on earth where you can't find a certain food chain that are selling them. I'm not sure if this should be a celebration of the love of the hamburger or a look into the ruthlessness of marketing, but anyway. What's interesting about a hamburger, despite their name, they aren't typically made with ham, but instead with beef. So, why are they called HAMburgers then?

Well we have the city of Hamburg in Germany to thank for it, but there's a much more to it than simply that. The city of Hamburg comes from a castle that was constructed in the city many years ago, *Hammaburg*. The *burg* means "castle" or "fort" but the meaning of the *hamma* part remains mysterious. Germans exploring Asia in the eighteenth century noticed something that the locals did with their beef. They placed it in their saddle so as they rode their horses the beef would get softer for easier consumption. The Germans loved this idea so much that they brought it back to the

city of Hamburg with them. Becoming known as Hamburg meat.

As more Germans immigrated to the States, they brought their Hamburg meat with them, and in the same way Germans fell in love with it in Asia, Americans fell in love with it too. By 1884 papers in the States where talking about the “Hamburg Steak” and in 1885 a man called Charlie Nagreen would make the first ever “American Hamburger” which was just the patty with no buns or extras. The first bun Hamburger would appear until 1904 as the Saint Louis World Fair.

Over time Hamburger was shortened to just burger, and other words put in front. Beef burger, chicken burger, and if you’re a hippie like me, veggie burger.

MAYONNAISE

You may have a jar of this egg-based sauce sitting in your fridge, and it might seem pretty boring, especially if you mouth hasn’t discovered the wonder that is mayonnaise on fries. But this sauce has a name and a history that somehow links it to one of the greatest wars in Roman history, the Second Punic War.

The Punic Wars were a series of wars fought between the Romans and the Carthaginians, Carthage being where modern Tunisia now stands. The second of these wars were led by a now legendary man called Hannibal Barca on the Carthaginian side. His journey from Carthage to Rome saw him beat the Romans easily

in many battles and perhaps most famously saw him traverse his men and many elephants over the Alps! He was, however, defeated when it came to actually capturing Rome, but he was alone in this battle. He had a whole army on his side as well as two brothers who joined him in arms: Hasdrubal Barca and Mago Barca.

It's that latter brother of Mago we are more interested in, as he survived the Second Punic War and legend has it he founded the city of Mahón on the island of Menorca, with the cities name coming from his own name. One of the city's most popular export was (and still is) the eggy sauce that was created on the island. The sauce was so popular that it was named after the city, Mayonnaise.

So mayonnaise is named after a city that is named after a key player in the Second Punic War. The impact of Roman history can be found in so many places, even in the sauce we cover our fries in.

COTTAGE PIE

Britain has blessed the world with some truly bizarrely named food, from toad in the hole, spotted dick, and Bubble and Squeak. Yet as ridiculous as some of these are, many of the origins of these names aren't that clear to us. So we will stick with the oddly named cottage pie.

Some readers might be a bit confused as to what exactly cottage pie is, honestly I'm not too sure how well known outside of the UK it is. Imagine minced beef with chopped up vegetables in it, topped with a layer

of mashed potato and baked in the oven, delicious stuff. Cottage pie, while now enjoyed by many, was originally a dish for the lower, working people of Britain. This "pie" became popular when potatoes became more available to working class people.

The traditional abode of working class people were in fact cottages. Hence why these meals became called cottage pies. What's interesting is that it's only considered a cottage pie when made with beef. When made with lamb it is known as a shepherd's pie, due to shepherd's sheepish occupation.

FRENCH TOAST

Straight up, French toast isn't even French. Recipes for a proto-French toast have been found from the fourth century, being whipped up by Romans. This recipe out dates the country of France as we know it itself. The Romans called this dish *Pan Dulcis* and was mixed with just milk, but sometimes egg, and then fried up. This type of meal came up again in fifteenth-century England this time known as *pain perdu* which meant "lost bread." This bread was "lost" as the bread fried up with milk was normally hard and stale. The French still called French toast as we know it *Pain perdu*.

So what about that modern name of French toast? Well it's not because it came from France but rather it was pioneered by a man named Joseph French in 1724. It should really be French's Toast but over time it became just French toast.

COCONUT

Neither a nut nor chocolate, the coconut is a very odd name indeed. Coconuts look like many things. While coconuts may look like hairy bowling balls, they're actually named after, of all things, ghosts of Spanish origin called the Coco. The Coco is the kind of mischievous creature to people of Spanish origin as the Bogeyman is to English speakers. Many Spanish children have been told that the Coco would come for them if they misbehaved.

When Spanish seafarers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries came across these hairy balls that claimed to be a fruit (they're actually something called a drupe) they thought the three holes at the end of them looked like the face of the Coco, resulting in the coconut earning its name. Coco has also gone on to mean "a grinning or grimacing face" in Spanish and Portuguese thanks to the expression on the face of a coconut. Though in all honesty I think their "face" looks kind of cute.

KUNG PAO CHICKEN

This Chinese dish is perhaps the only food that has a name that sounds like a word you'd read in a comic book while some villain is getting punched in the face. Though this oriental meals name doesn't come from the pages of a comic book, but the pages of history books.

In Chinese this meal is called *gōngbǎo jīdīng* (in Chinese 宫保鸡丁) and was named after the Chinese Official Ding Baozhen. Born in 1820 he allegedly fell into a river, only to be luckily saved by a passerby. The young Ding grew up to become a government official in China, the name of his rank was *Gōngbǎo* which means "Palace Guardian." When he was older he visited the family of the man who saved his life as a child. Where he was served a chicken dish that he loved so much he asked for the recipe himself to serve to his guests. It became so popular that the dish became so associated with him that it was named after his rank, *gōngbǎo jīdīng,* which in English became Kung Pao Chicken.

AVOCADO

The fruit enjoyed by young people everywhere. From being eaten as-is to being spread on toast, this fruit is having somewhat of a revival. But maybe by the time you're reading this in your fallout shelter waiting for the radiated wasteland to become habitable, the avocado boom will have subsided.

Avocados may look like pears or even like cucumbers while growing. Their name comes from something else people thought they looked like...testicles. The word comes from the Nahuatl Indian word *ahuácatl* which means testicles as the Aztecs thought the fruit was somewhat reminiscent in appearance to the low hanging fruit of men. The fruit has also had a more reptilian based names. The alligator pear. The skin of the

fruit was thought to look somewhat like the scales of the alligator.

One of the more popular ways to serve avocado is as guacamole. This word too is Nahuatl, originally as *ahuacamolli* which is a combination of the aforementioned Nahuatl name for the fruit and their word *molli* which means "sauce." So guacamole *basically* means testicle sauce. Feel free to eat it now.

ANZAC BISCUITS

The term biscuit means different things in different parts of the world. In the USA a biscuit is a kind of bready, scone-type thing. While in other parts of the world like Britain, Australia, and New Zealand, a biscuit is a sweet treat. Preferably (well by this author anyway) dunked in a cup of tea. Anzac Biscuits are these kind of biscuits.

While these biscuits have a sweet taste, their history isn't as sweet unfortunately. It started in World War I with the Gallipoli campaign when Australian and New Zealand soldiers landed in Turkey in 1915. Leading to the first mass casualties of Australian and New Zealand soldiers in the war, the soldiers from these countries became known as the Anzacs, with Anzac being an acronym from "Australian and New Zealand Army Corps." These simple-to-make biscuits were sent to these soldiers from their homeland and sold at bake sales there to help raise funds for war and charities.

On April 25th of every year, both these nations observe Anzac Day where all soldiers who have died in war and service are remembered. With Anzac Biscuits being baked for the remembrance too.

YOGURT

Hold on, is yogurt even a food? This whole category is about food and yogurt is more or less a liquid? Yet I guess human culture has decided it's a food, so here it is. Eaten by billions around the world this foodstuff has its origins in Turkey as *yogurt*. The "urt" part of the name doesn't seem to be that clear to us but the "yog" part comes from the Turkish *yog* which means "condense" and yogurt is a kind of condensed milk. Though yogurt was eaten before the Turks in places like ancient Rome, Greece, and Egypt, where they called it *oxygala* meaning "acid milk."

The food entered the English language around the 1600s. Travel writer Samuel Purchas spoke about the way the Turks drank milk, saying that the milk had "been made sour" calling it "*yoghurd.*" Over time this became the English name we know it was today: yogurt.

DONER KEBAB

The doner kebab is a food that is just as beautiful as it is horrific, depending on how long and late your Saturday night has been. The word Kebab is obviously of Turkish

origin and means “to roast” in relation to how the meat of a kebab is prepared. Kebabs are actually prepared in a couple different ways, and these different ways actually get different words added to the start of their name. One of these is the Shish Kebab which is when the meat is skewed onto a stick. The shish part of this name comes from the Turkish şiş meaning sword/skewer to reflect this.

So what does the doner part of the name mean in the doner kebab? Well doner too comes from Turkish word *döner* which means rotating. As doner kebab meat is cooked on a rotating stick. As the meal became popular in the English speaking word the ö was replaced with an o and it has stuck since.

Toys & Games

Was there anything more exciting in childhood than receiving a new toy? Whether it was for a birthday or a treat from a rarely seen family member, the excitement of a new plaything was a peak of childhood. Some of us (definitely not talking about myself) don't outgrow our toys. My family members still get angry at stepping on a Lego now in the same way they did when I was a kid. Toys and games have to be given exciting names, in hopes of attracting the attention of passing by children, and grown-ups alike.

LEGO

The modern Lego brick was perfected in 1958 and hasn't changed since. Why change perfection? Since then, these bricks have been sold in all corners of the world forming things like spaceships, islands, animals, and even real world landmarks! Yet, the name Lego outdates the bricks.

The Lego Group was founded all the way back in 1932 in Denmark. Making traditional wooden toys at the time, the name for this company came from a combination of two Danish words: *leg* and *godt*, which means "play well" as the Lego Group have always believed in, well...playing well with their toys. With the enduring popularity of Lego bricks, it seems safe to say this idea of "play well" has been well and truly achieved.

TEDDY BEAR

Teddy bears are a toy that seem as old as time themselves. Everyone seems to have owned a teddy bear as a child. Yet in the grand scheme, teddy bears only came into being at the turn on the nineteenth century. What's also interesting is that they came into existence around the same time in two different places. In America being created by toymaker Morris Michtom and in Germany by Richard Steiff. Of course they are called bears because they look like cute versions of real life bears, so why teddy? They were actually named after a real life Teddy, well a Theodore anyway. That Theodore being twenty-sixth President of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt.

The story goes that Roosevelt was on a hunting trip in Mississippi and while every other member of his party had seen and shot a bear, Roosevelt couldn't find a single one! This led to Roosevelt's assistants to capture a black bear cub and tie it to a tree, making an easy kill for Roosevelt. When the then-president saw the poor bear, however, he was mortified, claiming how unfair and unsportsmanlike it was for the bear. Roosevelt ordered that the bear be set free back into the wild.

This story reached all of America, and in honour of the kindness that the president had shown the bear cub, toy bears bearing his name (well his nickname) were created. And thus, the teddy bear was born!

CHESS

Chess is one of the oldest games in the history of humanity. A game thought to be over 1,000 years old, and while there are some ideas about how it was created, no one knows the true origin behind this beloved game. The story we need to follow, however, to understand, the etymology behind chess is from its believed origins in India.

The game played in India was different to the game as we know it today and it was called *chaturanga* meaning "four arms" in reference to the four arms of the Indian military represented in the game. Elephants, horses, chariots, and foot soldiers. What a shame that elephants are no longer in the modern game of chess. However while not represented in the name, kings, counselors, and boats were in this version of the game too.

This game spread throughout the world, being changed to fit the militaries of respective countries. In the Latin speaking world it became *Ludis Scaccorum* meaning "game of checks." This name for the game put more emphasis on the skill of checking in the game as opposed to the military side of things. The "check" aspect of the game went into naming across Europe. Where in Middle French it became *esches* which was their word for check. Of course the English word for check is well... check. It was the mixture of the English word check and the Middle French *esches* where we finally got the name chess.

CARD GAMES

Playing cards are thought to come from China and, like chess, are considered to be around 1,000 years old! Yet the modern fifty-two-deck of cards illustrated with hearts, spades, diamonds, and clubs, are thought to have appeared in Europe around the 1300s. Though those patterns are the most well-known, many countries have suits only found internally. German decks or cards have acorns and Swiss playing cards have bells! Now just "card" itself has a pretty dull etymology. Simply coming from the Greek *khartes* meaning "layers of papyrus" so instead, let's look at how some of the games that are played with cards got their names.

Poker is perhaps the most played of all card games. From basements with friends to the casinos of Las Vegas, it's hard to not find poker being played somewhere. What's interesting about poker is while your hand of cards is important, that's only one aspect of the game. Your demeanour and, well, "poker face" as it has become known, is just as integral. It's from this aspect of the game that it got its name. Poker as we know it was inspired by a French card game, *Poque*, which got its name from a German card game called *Pochspiel*. This German game got its name from the German word *pochen* which meant "to brag or bluff," much like you must do in the modern game of poker. When the French game came to the States, played in the French quarter of New Orleans in the nineteenth century, the name was angelized to poker.

While more commonly as “twenty-one,” due to the fact your cards need to add up to twenty-one to win, this game is also known as Blackjack. Of course there are many combinations of cards that can add up to twenty-one, but one that is held in higher regards (one source tells me that if you got this combination you would receive extra winnings) is the ace of spades and the jack of spades. Of course the spade is a black card, and jack is called jack. Hence why it became known as Blackjack.

One of the most popular card games more often than not isn’t played with cards at all, but is now more popular on screens. I remember playing it on a beige lump of a computer, hoping to complete it to see the cards come flying towards the screen! Now that’s me showing my age a tad too much, I am talking about solitaire. Solitaire is one of the few card games that can be played by just one person. You could say that playing solitaire is rather… solitary. This is exactly why the game is named what it is. Solitaire is a solitary game!

CLOCKWORK ROBOTS

I guess robots aren’t really toys, but my favourite kind of robots are the clockwork retro kind you seen with keys in their side waddling along a coffee table. So, here they are, and besides robot has a really cool etymology.

We discussed where the word clock came from earlier when talking about the grandfather clock and word simply evolved from the Old English word *weorc*. So what about the word robot? While we think of robots

as a fairly modern, ever-progressing type of machine, the name robot actually dates back to the 1920s! Before transformers, cybermen, or even the likes of Robbie the Robot from the 1956 "Forbidden Planet" were even a thing.

Robot actually came into the English language as a translation of the Czech *robotnik* which was coined by playwright Karel Capek in his 1920 play "Rossum's Universal Robot." This word *robotnik* means "forced worker" coming from the Old Church Slavonic *rabota* meaning "servitude." They were named in reference to workers and servants as that was the original idea of a robot. A machine that could do work for us. I'm sure our ancestors will chuckle at this concept of robots being our servants in the future. When they have finally taken over the planet and we are their playthings. Actually, come to think of it, the robots probably would have banished laughter by then.

TAMAGOTCHI

Now this is showing my age. Tamagotchis were a staple of the '90s. Feeding your Tamagotchi under the desk hoping the teacher wouldn't take it away from you where it would inevitably die, man those things died so easily. Tamagotchis came into the world from Japan as one of the first wave of fads that Japan brought to the world in the '90s. Later in the '90s Pokémania ran wild... man, I miss the '90s.

Being from Japan means that Tamagotchi is a Japanese name. With the name being a combination of Japanese words. However what Japanese words exactly are up for debate. The one that the internet seems to agree upon is the Japanese word for egg, *tamago*, as the devices that these weird little virtual pets were housed in are egg shaped. So what about the "chi" part of the toys name? This is where more debate comes into play. Some argue that the chi stands for just that *chi.* Which is a term of affection in Japanese, so the name could be "lovable egg." Another idea is that it comes from the Japanese for friend *tomodachi.* Meaning Tamagotchi could also mean "egg friend."

Yet the more popular theory is that the "chi" part of the name comes from the Japanese translation of the English word for watch, *uotchi,* as Tamagotchis told the time as well.

BARBIE AND KEN

Barbie (and her boyfriend Ken) have been enduringly popular with children for over 50 years! Yet while the power couple might be one of the most popular toys on the planet, at first the executive at Mattel thought no kids would be interesting in them. Barbie was conceived by Ruth Handler, co-founder of Mattel Toys, the other co-founder being her husband. Ruth saw her daughter play with paper dolls and thought it would be great if her daughter had a 3D adult doll to play with, as most dolls at the time where babies or toddlers. She suggested this

idea to her husband and he wasn't too keen on it himself, neither were his co-workers at Mattel.

This changed, however, when Ruth and her children visited Germany, where she spied the German Bild Lilli doll; it was the doll that Barbie would be based on. Her daughter loved playing with the doll, but in reality the doll was actually meant as a cheeky joke gift to give to men. Nevertheless her daughter loved her Bild Lilli and Ruth brought some back to the States from Germany to prove to her co-workers at Mattel that kids would play with adult dolls. Production on the dolls went ahead and of course the rest is history.

Barbie dolls first came out in 1959 and was a huge success! It would only be two years later in 1961 her accessory/boyfriend would be released, Ken. But how on Earth did these two dolls get their names? Well remember I said Ruth's daughter loved playing with the dolls? And that her children went to Germany with her? Well her children were named Barbara and Kenneth. It was the siblings names (well shortened versions of their names) that became the couples name. Which is only slightly Freudian...

But did you know that Barbie and Ken aren't their only names? They aren't like Madonna or Seal with just one name. They both actually have known full names. Barbie's full name is Barbie Millicent Roberts and Ken's full name is Kenneth Carson.

JIGSAW PUZZLE

Is a puzzle even a type of game? Puzzles very much take up a whole category of their own in the realm of things we play with. Without doubt the most popular of types of puzzles are the kind that are made up of many little pieces that join together to form a picture—jigsaw puzzles!

Solving the puzzle of the etymology of the word puzzle is unfortunately a puzzle we aren't able to solve, as no one is too sure where the word came from, very puzzling indeed! Regardless of the word puzzle why are these ones called "jigsaw" puzzles? Well when these puzzles were originally created, they were painted onto flat pieces of wood and then broken up into interlocking pieces. But how would the wood be split up? What kind of tool would be used to separate the pieces? Well it would be done with none other than the power tool, a jigsaw.

But why is a jigsaw called a jigsaw?! Well when using a jigsaw the saw goes up and down, a movement that could be considered a jig. The jigsaw is a saw that jigs.

DOMINOES

No, not the pizza. Domino game pieces have first been found in ancient China and have been played around the world. While a single domino piece even being found on the wreckage of the Mary Rose! One part of the world

where dominoes are hugely popular is in the Caribbean. The WCDF (World Council of Domino Federations) is based in Barbados.

The name domino however isn't from China or the Caribbean but from France. With the French word *domino* meaning "hood with cloak worn by priests." Why this became linked with the game pieces isn't too clear to us. Perhaps the blackness of the priests' food with their eyes peering out resembled the black dominoes with the white spots.

VIDEO GAME CONSOLE

I'm sure many people would happily complain about how "kids these days don't play with toys anymore but are obsessed with their video games" but you know what? By this time in history video games are far from a new idea. One of the first things to be considered a video game was "Tennis for Two" which was created in 1958! Since then video games have only become more advanced, with the arcade classics like Pong and Space Invaders to the first home video game console the Magnavox Odyssey being released in 1972.

This isn't so much about how the words video, game, and console came to be, as they have rather dull etymologies, but let's look at some of the more popular consoles of gaming history and figure out how they were named. Some of the earlier consoles had pretty mechanical names. The Atari 800, the Commodore 64, the SG-1000. All very basic computer-y names for very basic

computers. However this boom on gaming came to a holt with the video game crash of 1983. This could have been the end of video games in the west as we know them, but luckily Nintendo saved the day.

They introduced their console to America in 1985 naming it the Nintendo Entertainment System, NES for short. This name was given to the console to distance itself from the computers of the past. The name disguised the console as something the whole family could gain entertainment out of, not just another computer that people had grown sick of by then. In fact, Nintendo wanted the NES to be seen as a toy and not a console so badly they bundled a robot that could interact with certain games with the system so toy stores would see it more as a toy and stock the thing.

That was all in the past though, video games and their image in the world have changed completely, with the only company from then that is still standing really being Nintendo. Now Microsoft and Sony join them as the top video game console makers. Sony has their PlayStation line of consoles and Microsoft their Xbox consoles. The name PlayStation came to be to propel the idea of fun you can have with the machine, opposing to the boring machines you would use at your job, called workstations. Xbox's name comes from the software used to help create it, DirectX, the DirectX Box became simply the Xbox.

When newer versions of these consoles were produced Sony, like a bad movie franchise, just kept on adding numbers to the end. PlayStation 2, 3, 4...you might be

playing on your PlayStation 3478 by the time you read this. Microsoft chose to give their follow up Xboxes more unique names. The Xbox 360 name was chosen to imply that the “gamer is at the center of the Xbox experience” or some kind of advertising mumbo jumbo. With the 360s follow up not being Xbox 361 but just the Xbox One, to show how the console is an “all-in-one experience.” As stated earlier, advertising mumbo jumbo.

Companies & Brands

Names are important in every aspect of the world, from countries, to animals, to people. They are even important in the ever-changing world of business. A company needs a great name for a few reasons: so they can stick out above the competition, so they can be easily remembered by possible customers, and so they can enter the public conscious. If a company or a brand can hit the nail on the head with their name then it can very well become a name known by a huge majority of the population on planet Earth. Let's take a look at some of these companies and see how their iconic names became so iconic.

APPLE

I'm writing this book on an Apple computer right now. It hard to not see the impact just over the last ten years or so of how Apple has shaped the world, first with the iPod and then with the iPhone. Even though the first iPod came out only in 2001, Apple as a company was founded all the way back in 1976, chiefly, by the two famous Steve's of Apple. Steve Wozniak and Steve Jobs. It was in that year that too that Steve Wozniak (let's just call him the Woz from now on) constructed the first computer made by Apple, the Apple I. It looked somewhat like a keyboard and broke from the mold of computers at the time by having no screen of its own! Rather, you had to plug it into a television and use that as a screen, a very common practice in the world of computers now.

Apple products are some of the most unnatural things we have, looking like something that would be seen on a spaceship than on our planet, so why do they have such a "natural" name? Well there are some more fanciful ideas of how this name came to be. One is it was named in ode of Isaac Newton, in honour of the eureka moment that came to him when an apple supposedly dropped on his head. Another idea is that it was named after Alan Turing, a huge figure in the world of computers, who met his demise by taking a bite into an apple laced with cyanide. Why was there an apple laced with cyanide? Well that's a whole horrible story onto itself which would rather bring down the tone of this book. Maybe ask Siri about it.

However Apple wasn't named in honour of either of these men, in fact it wasn't named after a person at all. It was just named...after apples. While working with the Woz and trying to break into the world of computing Steve Jobs (we'll call him the Jobs from now on) worked part time at an orchard. The Jobs worked with many apples at the orchard and those apples inspired the name. The Jobs apparently thought the name Apple was "fun spirited and not intimidating" and after the suggestion of Apple, the Jobs and the Woz couldn't think of anything better.

MCDONALDS

McDonald's is a company that has been scrutinized under the public eye in more recent years. They were feeding families with no worries up till the moment

people started to wonder to themselves: *What on earth is McDonald's putting in my mouth?* Since then, the company has tried to maintain a good image in the public eye and in all honesty, they have, I guess? I mean you still see the golden arches more or less everywhere you go.

McDonald is actually a fairly common surname. In fact it's one of the most popular Scottish clan names there is. But that popularity might be thanks to the fast food chain. The surname McDonald (which can also be MacDonald) means "son of Donald" so which McDonald is McDonald's a fast food chain named after?

Well it's actually two McDonalds, Richard and Maurice McDonald, known collectively as the McDonald's Brothers. These brothers started out in 1937 selling hotdogs from a hotdog stand (what a shame hotdogs are no longer on the menu) and from here their food grew more popular and led them to opening restaurants. Entrepreneur Ray Kroc visit their restaurant as they had purchased his brand of multimixers. Here Kroc saw a restaurant like none other: a limited menu, with a focus on speed and quality. Kroc fell in love with it, promising to make McDonald's a hit across the country. The rest is history.

NINTENDO

The kings of video games! I have a tattoo of Mario and friends on my forearm, so I might be being a tad bias here. Nintendo is a company of Japanese origin with

their name in Kanji being this (任天堂) which is considered to translate into English as one of two fairly similar translations. I shan't bore you with all the details of how exactly the name translates from Kanji into English, but the name is thought to mean either "leave luck to heaven" or "to leave one's fortune in the hands of fate."

Now I know what you're thinking, why on Earth would a company that makes video games have a name that relates to luck and fate? Well while Nintendo have always made games, they haven't always been making video games. In fact Nintendo was founded all the way back in 1889! Of course it wasn't video games they were making at the turn of the century, but card games instead. The card game this early Nintendo made was *Hanafuda*, a card game native to Japan that is still played today. Over time the company focused on other kinds of games. From toys, to small portable video games called "Game & Watch," to arcade cabinets. It was while working on arcade cabinets they made a game called Donkey Kong which feature a character called Jumpman. Eventually Jumpman's name changed to Mario and we all know what happened from there.

Though the company is now firmly rooted in the videogame industry, in Japan Nintendo still makes *Hanafuda* cards in celebration of their history.

DISNEY

From movies to television shows, toys to theme parks, there are few places the House of Mouse hasn't stuck

their oversized gloved fingers in. Disney is obviously named after the founder of the company, Mr. Walter Elias Disney. So the next question is, where did the name Disney come from?

Disney is actually a name of French origin, Norman to be exact. Surnames can be constructed from a variety of ways. As we saw with McDonalds, they can relate to parenthood, with surnames like Thomson, son of Thomas. Another way surnames came to be was through job occupations with surnames like Merchant and Taylor. The surname Disney, however, is neither of these. That was merely interesting padding to help hit the wordcount. The surname Disney is something known as a habitational name. Meaning the name relates to the location of the people with it, well when the name first came to be anyway, as Walt was not from France.

The surname was originally *D'isigny* meaning "from Isigny." The Isigny in this name relates to the small French commune of Isigny-sur-Mer. One of Walt's earliest known relatives was a man by the name Jean-Christophe D'isigny. From here, the name evolved into Disney as we know it today.

MICROSOFT

The leader in the computing world. Microsoft is a name pretty much synonymous with computers. The company itself however is only one year older than Apple, being founded in 1975. Unlike Apple, Microsoft didn't make actual computers, but rather just the software that

goes onto the computers. It's because of the company's software creating ability where the "soft" part of their name comes from.

So if they make software for computers, why aren't they called something like Compusoft? Where does the micro part of their name come from? Is it because the software made by the company's founders, Bill Gates & Paul Allen, was very small? Well while their software wasn't micro, what they were making software for was. The Altair 8800 was a kind of computer that came out around the same time as Bill Gates and Paul Allen where starting to form ideas about the company they would soon establish.

The Altair 8800 was a very impressive computer for its time, but what it lacked was any kind of easy to use software. This is where Microsoft came into play. The Altair 8800 was a kind of computer called a Microcomputer. So yes, they were making SOFTware for MICROcomputers. Gates and Allen put together parts of both these words to make the name for their company, Microsoft.

NIKE

Nike (definitively pronounced as ny-kee) started life in 1964 with a completely different name, Blue Ribbon Sports. It's more than safe to say this is far from the most exciting name so thank goodness that perhaps the most famous shoemakers in the world gave themselves a more exciting name.

But what does this name even mean? It's such a short, weird little word with no real relation to anything, how did this name come about? Well I was just as surprised to find out as I hope you will be to find out that the name of the shoe company Nike, has roots in the mythology of ancient Greece. It's not even a stretch of originating from mythology in some odd way. There's literally a goddess in Greek mythology called Nike.

Why was it this god and not one of the more well-known gods (imagine if they were called Zeus shoes?!) that this shoes company are named after? Well Nike is the goddess of victory. Being a company that makes sports shoes, and other sporting goods, it makes sense to name them after a god of victory, as you know, victory is kind of important in the world of sports. Though don't trust me on that, I'm not too good on facts when it comes into the world of sports. Regardless it makes for pretty good branding if your company is literally named after the goddess of victory!

WWE

If there is anything I love just as much as names, it is without a doubt the world of professional wrestling. The realm of wrestling doesn't get any crazier than with the biggest wrestling promotion in the world: the world of Vince McMahon that is the WWE. Of course, I could just say that WWE stands for World Wrestling Entertainment and call it a day. But, a lot of history has gone into the company to have that name today.

The company started life all the way back in 1952 under the name CWC, which stood for Capitol Wrestling Corporation. It was named this as the company was based in the New York area of the US Which many people consider to be the capital of the US as NYC is certainly bigger than Washington, DC, the actual capital of the US. As the CWC wished to expand to bigger heights, being named after the "capital" would not suffice. With this, they became the WWWF in 1963 which stood for World Wide Wrestling Federation. The "wide" was eventually dropped to give it the name of just WWF: the World Wrestling Federation.

So, how did the WWF become the WWE? Well for this name change we have some very angry pandas to thank, as there is another rather popular WWF. The World Wide Fund (for nature) threatened the World Wrestling Federation with legal action to not have the same name as them. With this warning of legal proceeding, in 2001 the WWF thus became the WWE.

GOOGLE

Can't you just find this one out for yourself? Like isn't there a website you can use to search for things like this or something? No? Fine, very well.

While the name Google might sound like gibberish a baby would spit out while trying to say granny the word Google has its origins in the world of mathematics. In maths however the word is spelt "googol" and it's the

name of the number that starts with a one, followed by one hundred zeros. Which is seen as this:

10,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,-
000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,-
000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000.

Safe to say that that is a pretty big number. It's a number that the creators of the search engine, Larry Page and Sergey Brin, liked so much that they named their company after the number. As they felt the unfathomably huge number reflected the unfathomably huge amount of search results that the site could give people. As I'm sure you saw earlier there is actually a spelling difference between the company "Google" and the number "googol." The company was spelt with an el instead of an ol simply because Larry Page just presumed it was spelt that way when seeing of google.com was available. I guess he couldn't Google to see how it was actually spelt.

VESPA

These little mopeds from Italy have become a hit worldwide. From delivering pizza around New York City to being topped by Mods in the '60s on Brighton beach. I am sure to most people, mopeds are synonymous with Vespa.

Vespas are perhaps just as famous for the sound they make as well as what they look like. With their small engines as opposed to the roar that an engine of a

motorbike or a car makes, the engine of a Vespa makes a more buzzing/humming sound as it nips through the streets of a city. The company was named after this sound the engines made as in Italian Vespa means "wasp" as in you know, the evil little creatures hellbent on making your life misery. Though I don't think the mopeds are as hellbent of misery so that's a good thing.

Yes they were named after wasps as much like real wasps, Vespas darted around quickly leaving a buzzing sound in their wake.

WIKIPEDIA

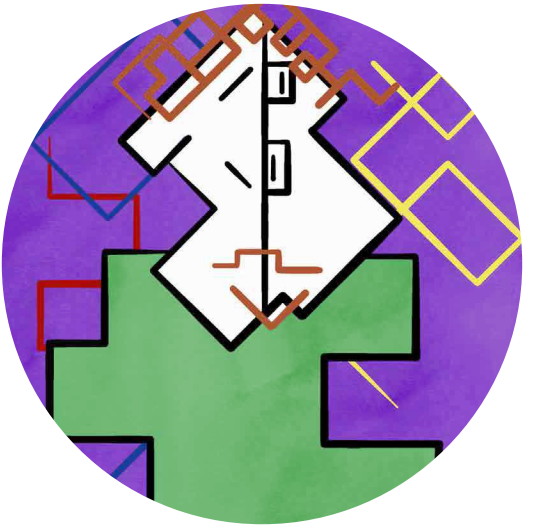
Imagine having a resource in this world, a resource that is completely free to use and holds a huge amount of the world's information within it, all in fairly easy to read language. Now imagine if that god-like source was frowned upon to actually use as many have deemed it untrustworthy, due to the fact that anyone can edit it. That my friends is the world we live in thanks to Wikipedia.

In all honesty Wikipedia is a fantastic tool. I will be honest and say now that Wikipedia has helped with the creation of this book. While I guess it shouldn't be taken as gospel Wikipedia is a great jumping off point into learning about other stuff. I can spend hours on Wikipedia, but anyway. What about that name?

The latter half of the name "pedia" is simply a riff encyclopedia, Wikipedia's book based grandfather. This

pedia part of the name comes from the proto-Indo-European *paideia* meaning "education." So what about the "wiki" part of the sites name? Well the wiki part of the name comes from the Hawaiian *wikiwiki* meaning quick. In relation to have quickly you can get information thanks to Wikipedia. Though that fact was actually from Wikipedia, so you might want to double check it.

Abstract Nouns



The majority of names discussed so far in this book, in language terms, would be considered concrete nouns. Concrete nouns are names for tangible things. Things you can look at, touch, hold in your hands, so what on earth is an abstract noun? Well no it's not a kind of noun that has its eyes on the side of its face, that's abstract art. An abstract noun is the name for something that isn't really there. Like the name of an emotion, a state of being, an idea. I'll be playing quite loose with the definition of an abstract noun but let's have a look at some!

BANKRUPTCY

Definitely not the most fun word to start on, bankruptcy is far from the nicest of things. As un-fun as the concept of bankruptcy is, its etymology is rather fun. The word bankruptcy itself looks like it might come from the words "bank" and "rupture." Which would make sense as going into bankruptcy could be seen as your bank breaking/rupturing. However this isn't exactly where the name comes from.

The name bankruptcy actually refers to a more literal breaking than a figurative breaking, coming from the Italian *banca rotta*, which means broken bench. This refers to the literal benches that Italian merchants would set up shop on in the markets of the past. When a merchant would no longer have the funds to keep their business afloat, the table they did business on was physically broken in two! This was the *banca rotta* (broken bench) that eventually changed into English into

bankruptcy. It's also from this bench being broken where we get the term "being broke" from referring to when someone has no money.

How fascinating, that a physical action of a bench being broken became the abstract concept of bankruptcy.

GOSSIP

Gossip isn't one of the nicest things either, but let's face the facts. We have all partaken in gossip once in our life. It's seems to be a common trait in humans to revel in the darker side of people behind their back. Kudos if you avoid gossip, you are a far better human than me.

The noun (which can also be a verb) has roots in baptism of all places. The word was originally the Old English *godsibb* meaning a "godparent" coming from the words "god" and "*sibb*" with *sibb* meaning relative, it's where we get the term sibling from. Over time this term of *godsibb* related to not just godparents but any close friend or family member. Especially linked to women and their fellow female friends. Gossip has always been more associated with women, but please know that as a male (with male friends) that men are just as awful with talking about people behind their backs. By the 1500s this *godsibb* turned to gossip and meant idle chat with people you are close with. Evolving into the idea of talk revolving around rumours.

NIGHTMARE

Nightmares are weird old things aren't they? When you're a kid the worst kinds of dreams you have are of scary monsters trying to attack you, but as you get older nightmares become less fanciful, grounded in reality, and somehow more terrifying. Bad dreams of monsters coming to get me have been replaced with bad dreams of close friends and family members passing away, have fun sleeping tonight folks!

While we still aren't too sure exactly what dreams mean and how they come to us, we definitely know a lot more than what they understood of dreams in the thirteenth century. In the thirteenth century a "nightmare" was the female evil spirit that invaded you during your sleep and attempted to suffocate you! A mare has always been a term associated with females, like how a mare is the name for a female horse, so it's no surprise to us that a nightmare was a female spirit. Over time the term nightmare stop referring to the spirits but just referred to the bad dreams it was once thought that they caused.

DREAM

Let's get away from nightmares though and look at the complete opposite of sleep visions. The world of dreams. Dreams can be extremely happy and extremely weird. They are probably one of the few things that link us to ancient humans. If you could get a caveman from the past, and teach them the same language as you, dreams

are probably one of the few things the two of you could talk about as a similar experience.

Dream is a word Nordic in origin. Coming from things like the Old Norse *draumr,* the Danish *drøm,* the Swedish *dröm,* and even the Dutch *droom.* All of these are thought to come from the Old Saxon *drom* meaning "merriment and noise" (more on this anglo-saxon origin in a moment) or even the proto Germanic *draugmas* meaning "deception, illusion, phantasm."

What's interesting about the word dream is that it existed in the Old English language too. However this dream had nothing to do with the dreams we see in our sleep but rather is meant "joy, mirth, noisy merriment" and "music" much like the aforementioned Old Saxon *drom.* Perhaps this word entered Old English via the Anglo-Saxons. How interesting is it though that the word dream, things that are so wonderful, was once a word for the wonder that is music!

MEME

Is meme even an abstract noun? I mean you can certainly see memes (they are becoming ever more present in our daily lives) but you can't really grasp or take hold of a meme, unless you print one out but that's a whole *ce n'est pas une meme* type scenario. But I couldn't not talk about memes, so here they are.

Modern internet memes can come from a huge variety of places, random photos, clips from movies, real world

events, animals. Anything (and I mean *anything*) is game in the world of online memes. The name meme for these online funnies however dates back to 1976, written first in the book *The Selfish Gene* written by evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins. In his book Dawkins played with the concept of ideas being like organisms, wondering what would happen if ideas bred and mutated in the way the organisms did through evolution.

Following this idea led Dawkins to feel that ideas and organisms were similar for they both rely on replications. Organisms rely on reproduction to continue while ideas rely on spread from brain to brain to survive. Not all ideas survive however, and even the ones that do survive can change over time. This concept of ideas behaving like living organisms needed a name. For a named he borrowed from the Greek *mimeme* which means "that which replicates" but cut of the "mi" at the start so it rhymes more with the term gene. He also insisted that the name meme could relate to the French *même* meaning "memory."

And at the dawn of funny images being passed around online, the name meme was adopted for them because like Dawkins concept of memes. Online memes changed and mutated over time the more they were shared around, and like Dawkins memes, they even died too.

DISASTER

Why are so many of the abstract nouns I'm covering so negative? Honestly it's these negative words that seem to

have a more interesting etymology. That theme seems to continue with the concept of a disaster. While things that are disasters: earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, are all very much real things, the actual concept of what makes something a disaster is very much an abstract noun.

The English word disaster came from the French *désastre* which came from the Old Italian *disastro*. Dis is a common prefix to words, normally with a negative connotation: disappoint, disapprove, diss track. So what about the "aster" part of the word which, as we see in Old Italian, was "*astro*" which has a very cosmic feel to it. The idea of disasters have their root in the world of astronomy. The Greeks thought much about their lives and the world around them could be understood by "reading" the stars in the night sky. They thought the way the stars and planets aligned would tell them what their future had in store for them.

When the stars told the ancient Greeks of negative events that would be coming up, this would be known as "ill-starred events" with the "ill" part of this becoming "diss" and the Greek word for star being *astron*. This of course led to the word disaster as we know it now. And while astrology is now only partaken by the select few and not the majority, disasters unfortunately still keep on happening.

LOOPHOLE

While a loophole now may be an abstract noun, the name for a way out of a situation you weren't intended to get out of, usually involving run ins with the law, in another time loopholes were very much a real thing.

So what were these real loopholes? Well they had nothing to do with getting out of legal trouble, they were more about escaping real trouble, that real trouble most of the time being certain death! A loophole was the small slit in the side of a castle, used to let light and air through and perhaps more importantly, shoot arrows through at people attacking your castle! However this could work the other way around, a skilled enough archer could fire an arrow through the loophole and into the castle. These tiny slits could sometimes be the only way to take down an impenetrable castle. Over time the skilled archers became lawyers, the castles became conviction charges, but the loopholes remained loopholes, well, in name only.

HISTORY

History may very well be one the true constant in the universe. History is in the past, history is being made right now and history will be made in the future. Pretty much everything that has, is, or will happen can be considered history, whether that be naturally made history or human made history, but why do we call all this stuff, history?

The word history is thought to have its roots in a verb rather than a noun, the Greek *historia* which means "to inquire." It's from this verb of seeking knowledge and answers that we can see where the word story might come from as well. Story and history seem to be only linked in this way. As story is now a word more associated with tales of fiction while history tend to be tales of truth, well what we know to be truth. History even has the word story within it, so where does the hi part of the name come from?

The "hi" part of the name is thought to come from the Greek *history* meaning a "wise man" and some believe that this is the word history as a whole comes from. It's this part where the word history has come under attack. History is a very male dominated thing. As unfortunately in the past (where most of history takes place) women weren't treated as well as they are now, being more sidelined letting men hog the spotlight more. This can be seen with history coming from "wise man" and the word history itself looking like a combination of the words his and story. This in the '70s led to the "herstory" movement, here history was rewritten from a female point of view, and emphasized the role that women have played in history.

While we have made some amazing head way since the dark ages in giving women a voice, perhaps one day the word will evolve to reflect that too. Whether that be just herstory or perhaps ourstory, celebrating the role we have all played.

CLUE

Like a disaster a clue can take a physical form, like a note, or a tape recording, or a blue dog paw print, but the concept of a clue is very much an abstract noun. Clues are all about helping us find an answer, and it's etymology reflects this.

The word clue hasn't actually changed that much from its origins from the 1500s. The word was originally *clew* and the key difference between a clue and a *clew* is that the former is an abstract noun, while the latter is very much a physical thing. A *clew* is a Germanic name for a ball of string. But what exactly has a ball of string got to do with helping solve a mystery? Well this links all the way back to a story from Greek mythology.

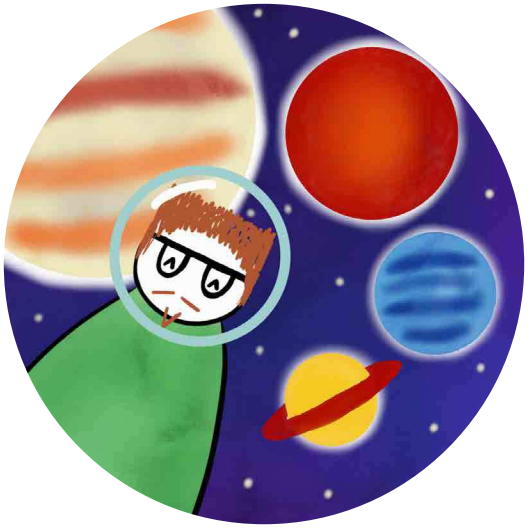
The story goes that a character called Theseus entered the infamous labyrinth where the ferocious half-man half-bull minotaur resided to slay the beast once and for all. To make sure that he wouldn't get lost in the labyrinth while in there he unwound his ball of string (*clew*) along the floor so the string would trace his path around the labyrinth. This was to make sure he could find his way back out once the beast had been defeated. His *clew* was very much his clue into getting back out of the labyrinth. And from this story we got the concept of a clue as we know it today.

SARCASM

Sarcasm is an odd thing. Some nations have an image of over using it while other nations supposedly have no idea what it even is. The key to understanding sarcasm is all in the tone of voice. While some use italics to emphasize sarcasm in the written word, *it doesn't always work.* This has led to a lot of confusion about sarcasm.

What isn't as confusing is our knowledge of where the name for the concept of sarcasm comes from. In the world of insulting people sarcasm is often considered one of the lowest forms of insult, but used correctly it can be devastating! Not that I'm suggesting you insult people. A great insult can make you feel like you've been physically assaulted, attacked, exposed, like the flesh has been shredded off your bones. It's actually from this where sarcasm comes from. Sarcasm comes from the Greek *sarkazein* which means "to speak bitterly, sneer" but also has a literally meaning to "strip off the flesh." This idea of flesh being stripped off the bone for some reason seems to seriously relate to the idea of being insulted, especially with the use of sarcasm.

Planets



Finally, let's leave the names of things on our home behind us and soar to the skies, into the stratosphere and look at the planets that surround our own. Now I could very easily simply say that (more or less) all the planets are named after gods and call it a day. The fact that the planets are named after gods seems to be a fairly well known thing. So let us take a closer look at these planets and their eponymous gods. Who exactly where these gods? And why their respective planet are named after them? Also what is and isn't a planet seems to be a hotly debated thing, here however I am going to stick to what I was taught were the planets in our solar system, as well as some others, you shall see.

MERCURY

The planet in our solar system closest to the Sun. Being the closest to the Sun means that it's the planet that revolves around the Sun the quickest in our solar system. It's because of this swiftness around the Sun that Mercury has its name. Most the planets are named after gods of Roman mythology. Roman mythology was lifted from Greek mythology so they share gods, but with different names. In Greek mythology Hermes is thought to be his equivalent—Mercury is the god of messages and communication, many see him as the messenger of the gods.

Delivering so many messages for gods mean you have to be quick, and it's thought that Mercury was the quickest of all the gods. The god Mercury and the planet Mercury

both share speed. Whether that be speed in sending messages, or speed in circulating the Sun. And yes, due to Mercury and Hermes being more or less one and the same, and Hermes being a messenger, it's why the courier service Hermes is named so.

VENUS

Venus has the distinction of being the only planet in our solar system to be named after a goddess instead of a god. It's safe to say that Venus is pretty hot! No, I'm not being derogatory to the goddess Venus (though she was considered the most beautiful of all the gods) but rather that the planet Venus is pretty hot. I fact it's the hottest planet in our solar system reaching heats of over 450 degrees Celsius! For perspective, the hottest recorded temperature on Earth is just shy of 60 degrees Celsius in Death Valley.

But the planet isn't named Venus due to its heat. It wasn't because Venus is as hot as the gods thought Venus was, but rather, the planet is as beautiful as the gods thought Venus was. Telescopes weren't as advanced as they are now in Roman times. Meaning, not every planet could be seen—only a few are visible to the human eye. Out of all the planets that can be seen by the human eye Venus shone the brightest. So it was named Venus due to its shining beauty being like the beauty of Venus herself.

EARTH

Earth, home, the little blue and green dot that defies everything. Earth was in the perfect location and had the perfect conditions for us to thrive, and thrive we have. Earth may be the only planet we know of to have life, but that isn't Earth's only distinction. Earth is the only planet not named after a god of any kind.

Earth wasn't named after a god because only planets got to be named after gods, and early astronomers didn't really see Earth as a planet. To them Earth was just home, the planets where the far off specks in the night sky. By the time we realised earth was just another planet the name "Earth" has been cemented, coming from the German words for ground *erda* or *erde*.

Earth is also known as is Terra Firma. This name comes from Latin meaning Firm Land, and in the Roman mythology Terra/Tellus was the goddess of the Earth. Seriously!? why isn't this the official name of our planet to keep in line with everything else!? Plus it would have given us another planet named after a goddess in the god dominated night sky.

MARS

As Bowie once said, is there life on Mars? Well probably not, but as Earth's nearest neighbour we have always been fascinated with what could be on Mars, and it turns out minus a huge volcano and lots of rocks, not much.

One of Mar's most popular attributes is it's red colour. This red colouring reminded the Romans of blood spilt in war. Due to this Mars was named after the Roman god of war Mars. When I tell you that Mars, the god of war, was a hugely important god in Roman culture, it really tells you a lot about what the Romans prioritized. Yet Mars was a hugely important god to the Romans for other reason. Most noticeably, it was thought that Mars was the father of Romulus, Rome's legendary founder.

What's also of interest is that the moons of Mars are called Phobos and Deimos. These were the names of Ares (Mars' Greek equivalent) children. So Mars and its moons are represent and father and his children, which is very cute.

JUPITER

Jupiter is the biggest of all the planets in our solar system, to understand just how big Jupiter is: we could fit our home planet Earth inside it...1,300 times. Because of its huge size, Jupiter is named after the biggest god, the mightiest god, the god of the sky and thunder, the king of the gods Jupiter, who you may know better by his Greek name: Zeus!

Zeus is perhaps known best not for his incredible power and feats of heroism, but more for his libido. Though a married man, Zeus couldn't resist so many other people—man or woman. It would seem there was no obstacle that would get in the way between Zeus and someone he wanted to "get to know better," for lack of

a better term. To be with someone, Zeus transformed himself into a bull, a swan, and a cuckoo just to name a few. One person transformed themselves into a goat in hopes that Zeus wouldn't be interested in a goat. He was. Another woman transformed herself as an island, which luckily Zeus wasn't into. Though, one of his later mistresses did end up giving birth to one of Zeus' sons on that very island.

Zeus' lovers are so renown that four of Jupiter's moons are named after four of his lovers: Europa, Ganymede, Callisto, and Io. None of Jupiter's moons, however, are named after his wife Juno. This makes the planet of Jupiter and it's moons a floating reminder of infidelity, which is something we really ought not to be celebrating.

SATURN

While it may only be the second biggest planet, no other planet can brag about having a failed video game console be named after it, the Sega Saturn, so at least it has that going for it. As well as being the namesake for the Sega Saturn, Saturn has another thing it's known for. It's beautiful rings that circle the planet made up of water, rock, and ice.

However these rings have nothing to do with how Saturn got its name. The Roman god, Saturn, wasn't the god of rings, but rather the god of other things. One of these being agriculture, yet it isn't because of either these factors to how the planet got its name. I don't imagine Saturn has the best weather for farming.

Saturn was also the god of time. To the Romans, Saturn was the furthest planet they knew of, meaning to them it was the planet that would take the longest time to orbit the Sun. It could've been because of this length of time it took to orbit and Saturn being the god of time as to why the planet was named after him.

Also of interest is that Saturn is next to Jupiter. In mythology Saturn was Jupiter's father. You would think that the "father" planet would be the bigger of the two, but Jupiter is far bigger than Saturn. Perhaps this reflect how in mythology Jupiter had to slay his tyrant father Saturn who kept eating all his children in fear that they would overthrow him. Jupiter (or Zeus as it would've been originally in Greek) was born unbeknownst to his father Saturn (Cronus in Greek) allowing him to kill his father and free his eaten siblings from his father's belly! It was a very different time.

URANUS

Okay, are done giggling? Yes? Good. Uranus is the planet with perhaps the most interesting history in regards to its name. So many names were suggested for it but somehow we still ended up with one that sounds like a butt. What's also interesting about Uranus is that it was the first planet to actually be discovered as opposed to just seen floating in the sky.

So what names did Uranus have before we ended up with the backside planet? Well it was discovered by British astronomer William Herschel, who promptly

named it after himself calling it Hershel, how humble of him. This name didn't stick around though and other names suggest for the planet followed the traditional god naming convention. Hypercronius was suggested, meaning "above cronus" with cronus being the Greek name for Saturn, this name related to the planets position by Saturn. Minerva was also suggested, the name of the Roman goddess of wisdom. I'm sure Potterheads will know of another Minerva who is a lady of wisdom.

We almost ended up with the planet being simply named George. Well, kind of. Herschel also offered to name the planet after then King of England George III, wanting to name it the Georgium Sidus. This name however wasn't popular outside of England, especially due to the fact the King George III was of German origin. The final name of Uranus was decided by German astronomer Johann Bode who suggest it be named after the Greek god Uranus. In the way Saturn was Jupiter's father, Uranus was Saturn's father! So the three planets are son, father, and grandfather!

One final word about Uranus (the planet, not what you're sitting on) is the names of its moons. The names of some of Uranus' moons are Ophelia, Cordelia, and Juliet. What do these names have in common? They are all names of characters from the works of William Shakespeare. A unique quirk to the names of the moons of Uranus.

NEPTUNE

If you have to describe Neptune in one word, I'm sure a lot of people would say that same one word—blue. Neptune is incredibly blue, while our Earth likes to brag about how blue it is, the blue of Neptune puts our little marble very much to shame. There is however no actual liquid water on Neptune.

Neptune looks like a floating ocean in the sky, so by no surprise it was named after the Roman god of the ocean Neptune. Neptune is the brother of Jupiter and was one of his siblings that he freed from his father's stomach. When Jupiter freed Neptune and his siblings from his father's stomach, they divided up the universe amongst themselves. Taking rule of the universe from their father. Jupiter took the sky and Neptune took the sea, but which sibling was left to look after the underworld?

PLUTO

Poor old Pluto. Discovered in 1930 but reclassified as a dwarf planet in 2006. To me you will always be one of the planets. Pluto is not only the smallest of the planets but the one furthest away from the Sun.

No, Pluto isn't named after a cartoon dog. Pluto is named after the Roman god Pluto. So who was Pluto? He was the hinted-at god of the underworld that I mentioned earlier. His Greek equivalent is Hades. I'm sure fellow children of the '90s (and parents of the '90s who had to

endure countless rewatches) will think of the blue flame haired Hades from Disney's Hercules. Yet the Pluto of Roman mythology wasn't quite as quippy as Disney's.

Pluto was not only god of the underworld but was judge of the dead, when you left your life on Earth it would be decided by Pluto what became of you, just saying his name in Roman times would have caused fear. The planet Pluto being named after this god is fitting, being so far from the rest of the planets and even being declassified as a planet mirrors how the god Pluto was so far removed and shunned by the rest of the gods. Not being able to reside with his fellow gods on Mount Olympus.

THE OTHER PLANETS

It's these nine planets most people think of when talk about the solar system. But as the years have gone on more planets/dwarf planets have been discovered not just in our solar system, but outside of ours too. Let's take a look at some of these, and do they still follow the convention of being named after gods?

Well, yes and no. Past Pluto we have the other dwarf planets of Haumea, Makemake, and Eris. Haumea is named after a goddess of Hawaiian mythology, not Roman. In Hawaiian mythology Haumea is the goddess of childbirth. To celebrate being named after the goddess of childbirth Haumea's moons are named after her children, Hi'iaka and Namaka. Makemake shares its name with the god of humanity in a mythology of

the Rapa Nui people of Easter Island. The name of Eris however goes back to Greek mythology, named after the Greek goddess of strife and discord Eris. Eris is the second biggest dwarf planet behind Pluto so it's fitting that these two dwarf planets are named after equally gloomy gods.

Between Mars and Jupiter we have an asteroid belt. In this belt we have another dwarf planet, Ceres. This one was named after the Roman goddess of agriculture, fertility, and motherly relationships. It's good to know that Venus isn't as alone as the only female planet as we first though.

After this however, things get a little dull. New planets are constantly being discovered outside of our solar system, some even thought to be enough like our Earth to be habitable! As exciting as this is, their names aren't as exciting. They are given names like Kepler-442b and LHS 1140 b. Mere placeholder names. Perhaps one day when we aren't all bound to this planet we will explore these planets and give them more god-like names! What would you call them?

Thanks for Watching!

Hey, you made it to the end! Don't forget to like, share, and subscr—wait, hold on, I don't need to say that here do I? Forgive me, force of habit. I guess something like a book needs a far more fitting end than the end of a YouTube video.

I guess in some ways this is the end of the book, in fact in many ways it very much is the end of the book. And while this book might be over I hope your journey into etymology is only just beginning! As I said at the start of this book, there's nothing I love more than hearing a fact so interesting that you just have to share it with other people. And I really hope that this book has inspired you to do that!

Take the facts you have read within this book, pick a favourite or two. Lock them into your brain and share them with as many people as you can. Tell your friends, your family, your work colleagues, your hairdresser! Tell people at parties and gatherings, they make great ice breakers! If there is anything I have learned from doing this is that people love interesting quirky facts.

There's so much in life we *need* to know. Your brain can get pretty stuffed with all the important, and let's face it, rather dull facts of life. I'll be honest, none of the facts and information in this book are vital to life. They aren't really that important, but isn't that what's so great about them? If we just knew in life the things we absolutely needed to know about than things would be pretty boring. Life should be made up of the unnecessary things. We don't need to play video games, but we do it because it's fun.

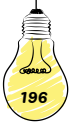
We don't need to explore other countries, but we do it because it's enlightening and fascinating. I don't have to explain names, but I do it because I love it, and I hope you do too.

A lot of people tend to think that because I make educational videos (and books now it would appear) that it must mean that I am a smart person. I can honestly tell you that I am far from a smart person. To me this has never been about being intelligent, it's about being curious. The way I see it is: smart people know the answers; curious people ask the questions. There are things you probably look at every day and don't give a second notice to. Next time you see something like this, think about it. Get excited about it. Let it scratch at your curiosity so much that you spend the rest of your day in an online research wormhole. It might even lead you to asking yourself the same question I ask myself on a regular basis. How did it get its name?

Aknowledgements

This book wouldn't exist without the literal thousands of years of history that led to these name coming into being. And more importantly all the amazing research people far more intelligent than me have undertaken. Pretty much none of this book is my own research, I am merely a regurgitator of information, like a mother bird feeding her chicks. Except instead of mushed up worms coming out my mouth and into yours, it's information about etymology. That was an awful metaphor. I apologise.

So many sources were used for the writing of this book. From university papers to tabloid websites, and so much in between! Here's just some of the key sources of information I used for this book, and perhaps where you can start your own etymological adventure.



WIKIPEDIA

What?! You use Wikipedia?! Well yes, I do. Wikipedia, when used correctly, is a fantastic source of information. It's easy to navigate and is all more or less written in an easy to understand way. Of course navigating Wikipedia is like navigating a seedy alley, have your wits around you. When you read something else on Wikipedia make sure to double check it. Check Wikipedia's sources and check it somewhere else to be safe. With this information Wikipedia will be your friend, and even your teacher can't turn their nose up at you for using Wikipedia to complete your homework.

ETYMONLINE

The holy grail of etymology! Etymonline is more or less the Google of etymology. An online dictionary of more or less every word in the English language. All sourced so it can be trusted. It feels like cheating telling you guys about it to be honest, pretend I said nothing.

THE LITTLE OXFORD DICTIONARY OF WORD ORIGINS

Written by Julia Cresswell, you know you can trust this book because not only is it an actual book, not some dingy website, but it has Oxford in the title! Perhaps the smartest place on Earth. This bite size book is actually a condensed version of The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology. This chibi version of that goliath book is a far more fun read, hand picking the best etymologies and putting them in themed sections. A book that puts etymologies into themed sectioned, that's a good idea.

THANK YOU!

Asides from all the places and sites that helped this book happen, there are many people in life that helped me so much in the writing of this book. This is the obligatory section of the book where I thank those around me. I always thought these sections of a book were silly and

unneeded, but now going through the trials of writing a book I finally understand why.

First off thank you to my wonderful family. My mum, dad, and two brothers. I don't think there are many families who would not only allow their youngest son to drop out of university and follow their dream career as a YouTuber, let alone endorse it! The support you have all given me is unbelievable. Thank you so much for allowing this son to live at home still and follow this dream. You are more than welcome for the free dog care I provide.

Thank you to all my friends who not only support my crazy schemes, but most importantly made sure my ego didn't get too swollen from all the excitement this career has led to. You have always been there to bring me back down to earth when my head has gotten so big it's started to orbit the Earth. Most importantly you guys have been at the pub and shared a pint with me as I have rabbited on about all my etymological escapades.

Thank you to all my fellow content creators. Whether you be someone I have worked with to make something wonderful, and in turn help my own creations grow more popular. You are someone I have exchanged words with, or more likely, tweets with. Or if you are one of the many content creators who have helped with the creation of this book in your own way. Most importantly, the podcasters that have been listened to while researching and writing this book. You may not know it but your work has helped my work tremendously.

Thank you to everyone at Mango Publishing, for taking the chance on me and giving me the opportunity to write this book. Introducing me and guiding me through the crazy world of publishing. And making sure that this book could be as good as it could be.

Most importantly of all, thank you to my wonderful girlfriend, who through no fault of her own fell into this bizarre world of YouTube and publishing. You have been with me every step of this journey, the good and the bad and are somehow still with me. Sticking with this oaf is perhaps the most amazing thing you do on a regular basis. I love you.

And of course, yes this is where it gets really cheesy, thank you to you. For reading this book, for watching my videos. None of this could've happened if people like you didn't take the time to care about what this weirdo was doing on the internet. I wrote this book, but it belongs to you.

This book started with a hello, so there's really only one word to truly end it with. Goodbye.

About the Author

Patrick Foote was born in London in 1994 and raised on the southeast coast of England. Although Patrick loved learning at school, he felt the education system was never quite right or engaging enough for him, so much so he dropped out of university after three months! All this led to the creation of the YouTube channel *Name Explain*, of which Patrick is the sole researcher, writer, animator, editor, and host. The channel was created to delve into people's curiosity and to get people learning in a fun and engaging way. It makes people think about things they never knew they wanted to know, relating to all things names. For instance, where is Old Zealand? Why do Austria & Australia have such similar names? Or if there are any descendants of Adolf Hitler still alive with the surname Hitler. In just over two years of existence *Name Explain* has amassed over 100,000 subscribers and over 10 million views. Patrick's key influences of his YouTube channel are CGP Grey and Xidnaf. His key writing influence is Bill Bryson.